



From Submission To Empowerment: Gendered Social Conditioning, Education And Female Agency In Ihechi Nkoro's *Ma Vie m'Appartient* And Lynn Mbuko's *Chaque Chose En Son Temps*

Abstract

This paper examined the transformation of the woman from social submission to personal empowerment in *Ma vie m'appartient* by Ihechi Nkoro and *Chaque chose en son temps* by Lynn Mbuko. The study investigated how gendered social conditioning shapes women's life choices in postcolonial African contexts that are marked by early marriage, polygamy, ethnic endogamy and excessive reproductive expectations. Despite growing scholarship on African women's writing, limited attention has been paid to the comparative study of empowerment narratives in contemporary Anglophone and Francophone African fiction. Much less attention has been paid particularly, to interdisciplinary frameworks that connect African feminist criticism with capability and critical consciousness theories. The study therefore, adopted a comparative literary methodology anchored on postcolonial feminist criticism and African gender theory. This draws on the conceptual insights of Deniz Kandiyoti's notion of "patriarchal bargaining", Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie's framework of African feminist self-recreation and Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí's critique of colonial construction of gender hierarchies. Through close textual analysis, the study demonstrated that in both texts, education, professional training and networks of female solidarity are key mechanisms through which women renegotiate patriarchal constraints. Nkoro's play highlights resistance to imposed marriage and ethnic exclusivism portrayed by Ezinma's eventual educational and professional self-realization whereas Mbuko's drama presents recovery, mentorship and institutional care as pathways to empowerment as seen through Zénabou's recovery and training as a nurse. Through a comparative reading, it is observed that, although the protagonists initially internalize patriarchal expectations, their encounters with supportive female figures and educational opportunities enable them to reclaim autonomy regarding their bodies, careers and marital choices. Thus, the authors, Nkoro and Mbuko reimagine womanhood not as a predetermined social role but as an evolving process of self-assertion negotiated through education, resilience and conscious agency.

Letitia Uloma Egege, Ph.D

University of Uyo

Akwa Ibom State

ORCID ID: 0009-0006-7287-0461

+2348037827663

Corresponding Author's Email:

letitiaegege@uniuyo.edu.ng

Date Received: 05th June, 2026

Date Accepted: 16th June, 2026

Keywords: African women's writing, comparative literature, postcolonial feminism, education, empowerment.

Introduction

Across many African societies, gender roles have historically been structured by deeply embedded cultural

expectations. These regulate women's access to education, marriage and social authority. The norms often produce gendered conditioning that encourage

women to internalize submission as an acceptable or even desirable feminine virtue. African women's literature has long engaged critically with these dynamics, exposing the social mechanisms through which patriarchal authority is reproduced. But they equally imagine alternative pathways toward female autonomy. Within the tradition, narratives of female awakening and empowerment frequently unfold through struggles against early marriage, polygamy, ethnic restrictions and the expectation that a woman's primary social value lies in marriage and reproduction. This article therefore, examines transformations of female submission in *Ma vie m'appartient* by Ihechi Obisike Nkoro and *Chaque chose en son temps* by Lynn Mbuko.

Through the trajectories of their respective protagonists, Ezinma and Zénabou respectively, both plays explore the tensions between patriarchal expectations and the possibilities of self-determination by women in contemporary African societies. Both narratives revolve around adolescent girls, Ezinma and Zénabou whose early lives are shaped by social pressures that strip them of their autonomy and restrict their education. In each case, the protagonist trajectory becomes a critique of gender norms that prioritize marriage over self-development. They construct pathways of empowerment rooted in education, solidarity and reclamation of personal agency.

Scholarly discussions of gender and women's agency in African literature have highlighted the ways

literary texts interrogate patriarchal norms and advance possibilities for the emancipation of women. African feminist critics such as Molar Ogundipe emphasize that women's liberation must be understood within the socio-cultural and historical conditions that shape African societies. She advocates what she describes as a framework of social transformation that includes women as active participants in societal development. This she calls "Stiwa" (229). In *Chaque chose en son temps*, Zénabou's reinvention through education and service illustrates what Ogundipe affirms as African women's capacity for "critical transformation", whereby education enables them to reconstruct identity beyond patriarchal prescriptions (Ogundipe 11-13).

Similarly, Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí challenges Universalist assumptions of gender hierarchies. She argues that many contemporary forms of patriarchal domination in Africa are partly products of colonial epistemologies that restructured indigenous social relations (Oyèwùmí). Likewise, Ifi Amadiume affirms that pre-colonial African societies often allowed flexible gender roles but were later rigidified by colonial and postcolonial power structures (Amadiume 15-18). Within literary circles, scholars have also drawn attention to the recurrent thematic concern with marriage, motherhood and female autonomy in African women's writing as illustrated in works such as *The Joys of Motherhood* by Buchi Emecheta which decries the suffering imposed on women through marriage

and motherhood. Her critique of womanhood signals it as an institution of endurance rather than fulfilment (224-226). Postcolonial gender theory provides insight into how gender oppression intersects with broader structures of power. Scholars such as Gayatri Spivak argue that women in postcolonial societies are often doubly marginalized by patriarchy and socio-economic structures inherited from colonialism (Spivak 271-273). Ezinma's vulnerability after widowhood reflects this intersection as patriarchy strips her of both social status and material security. Nkoro's narrative challenges this marginalization by repositioning women as agents rather than victims.

At the same time, broader theoretical approaches to empowerment have emphasized the transformative role of education and consciousness in enabling marginalized subjects to challenge oppressive social structures. Amartya Sen advances the capability approach which foregrounds real freedom as the one individuals have to live the lives they value. Nkoro's *Ma vie m'appartient* and Mbuko's *Chaque chose en son temps* expose capability deprivation (restricted education, lack of choice and early marriage). Also Sen's capability expansion approach highlights the expansion of individual freedoms and opportunities (access to schooling, economic independence and freedom to choose love) as a measure of empowerment (Sen 87). Meanwhile, Paulo Freire's concept of critical consciousness highlights the importance of awareness and reflection in the process of social emancipation.

Zénabou's intellectual awakening and regaining of agency align with this concept. (Freire 67).

Building on these theoretical perspectives, the present study offers a comparative analysis of female empowerment in Ihechi Nkoro's *Ma vie m'appartient* and Lynn Mbuko's *Chaque chose en son temps* and demonstrates how their works reconfigure women's agency. The study adopts a comparative literary approach which combines close textual analysis with socio-critical interpretation as methodology. By examining key dramatic episodes, dialogue and character development, the article demonstrates how both authors represent education, female solidarity and professional training as mechanisms through which women challenge patriarchal constraints and recreate themselves.

Patriarchy and Gendered Social Conditioning

In both *Ma vie m'appartient* and *Chaque chose en son temps*, patriarchy hardly operates through overt violence but rather through gendered social conditioning particularly, within the family structure. Nkoro and Mbuko present patriarchy as a system of control sustained by cultural beliefs, family norms, moral expectations and communal surveillance. These are internalized and transmitted by women themselves, especially, mothers. For instance, Ezinma's mother, Enyidiya embodies this mechanism when she repeatedly asserts that a woman's value is in marriage rather than in education: « En tant que femme, ses diplômes ne

veulent rien dire parce que, chez-nous, ... on ne respecte jamais une femme non-mariée... Chika est comme un arbre qui ne produit pas de fruit. Elle ne sert à rien » (Nkoro 13). [As a woman, her certificates mean nothing because, in our place, we do not ever respect an unmarried woman] (My translation).

Simon De Beauvoir's assertion that « On ne nait pas femme: on le devient » (*Second sexe* II 13) ["One is not born, but rather becomes, woman"] provides a crucial lens to understand Ezinma and Zenabou's trajectories. The female subject is not biologically destined but socialized to accept deprivation, emotional restraint and obedience as virtues while male authority is normalized and rarely questioned. In *Ma vie m'appartient*, Nkoro presents female submission as silence and endurance internalized early in life through family expectations and reinforced by economic vulnerability. Ezinma berates her older educated and independent cousin, Chika: "... à 35 ans, tu es toujours célibataire. Ecoutes-moi bien. Je te dis que tout le village se moque de tes parents ... Je serais bientôt une femme mariée de M. Uchenna ... (2-3). [... at 35 years old, you are still single. Listen properly to me, I am telling you that the whole village mocks your parents ... I will soon be Mr uchenna's married wife ...] (My translation). By accusing Chika of becoming a "spinster" despite her success, Ezinma reproduces the very discourse that patriarchy relies upon for its continuity. Chika is shocked at Uchenna's age, wealth-driven appeal and polygamous

household and this reveals the moral cost of equating marriage with material gain. (3). She embarks on a mission to Ezinma's parents to advise them to rescind their decision to marry off Ezinma at a young age. This reaction from Chika introduces a counter-discourse grounded in reason, ethics and responsibility. However, Enyidiya, Ezinma's mother confesses proudly to Chika that it is Enyidiya's husband who has made « un bon choix pour notre fille » (9) [a good choice for our daughter] (My translation). Yet Chika's intervention initially fails signaling that cultural conditioning has already normalized submission. Enyidiya, the bride's mother's endorsement of the marriage exposes maternal complicity in sustaining patriarchal structures. Such conditioning restricts her daughter's access to full education and autonomy and reproduces what Amartya Sen describes as capability deprivation, the systemic denial of the freedom required to pursue a valued life. (Sen 87).

A similar logic ensues in Mbuko's *Chaque chose en son temps* set in the secluded village of Garoua. Here, tradition and religion regulate social life and resistance to western-style education. This resistance is deeply gendered: while some boys may attend school under compulsion, girls are withdrawn and married off. Mbuko heightens the critique of gendered social conditioning through the negotiation of Zénabou's proposed marriage to El-hadj Oumar, a wealthy but illiterate merchant. This episode exposes marriage as an economic transaction in

which the girl-child becomes an object of exchange between men: the father and the suitor or his proxy. Yet, women are often listed as ideological enforcers: "Elhadji, mon patron demande la main de ta fille en mariage" (Mbuko 39). [Alhadji, my boss asks for your daughter's hand in marriage] (My translation)". Although Ahmadou initially hesitates, giving the excuse of Zenabou's schooling, Hamza dismisses female education outrightly: "L'éducation des jeunes filles, à quoi ça sert?" [Education of young girls, of what use is it? He asserts instead that "la place de la femme est au foyer" [the place of the woman is in the home] (Mbuko 39). This assertion exemplifies patriarchal ideology and reduces women's social value to domestic utility and reproductive availability. Ahmadou tries to resist though weakly, because of the strokes of cane he received from enforcers of the Whiteman's school (39). Nonetheless, this resistance is quickly undermined by the emissary's symbolic bribe: "Voici cinq cents naira. C'est pour tes colas" (40) [Here is five hundred naira. It is for your kola] (My translation). This is a gesture that fuses tradition, hospitality and corruption together (Mbuko 40). Money thus operates here as persuasion and an antidote to morality.

The most striking dimension of this episode is the role of desperation played by Zénabou's mother, Fatou. Driven by economic precarity, Fatou reconstructs early marriage as opportunity. She mobilizes discourses of chastity, wealth and special respectability to pressure her husband,

telling him that refusing such money would be irrational: "Tu ne dois pas refuser tant de richesse tout simplement parce qu'elle doit achever ses études dans cette école là" [You should not reject so much wealth simply because she has to complete her studies in that school] (Mbuko 42). By Fatou's desperation, Mbuko reveals how women themselves internalize and reproduce oppressive norms when survival is at stake. The roles played by Fatou and Enyidiya corroborate what Amina Mama observes: that women may reproduce patriarchal values, becoming enforcers rather than challengers of gender oppression (Mama 7-9).

When Zénabou is finally informed, she articulates her developmental vision of not wanting her education to be marred by marriage, invoking her teacher's encouragement to continue to secondary education (Mbuko 44). Then follows her mother's final warning: "Si tu continues tes études jusqu'au lycée, tu ne trouveras plus de mari. C'est sûr!" [If you continue your studies up to the secondary school, you will not find a husband anymore. That is certain] (Mbuko 45). This functions as a powerful disciplinary threat, revealing how education is constructed as a liability rather than as an asset for girls. Ultimately, the mis-socialization of girls is aimed at the man's pleasure without any consideration of the girl-child's emotions. This reflects Egege's analysis of the ironie and paradox of the forced marriages of two half-sisters, Ramla and Hindou in Djaili Amadou Amal's novel,

Munyal: "Le malheur et l'angoisse des jeunes mariées se juxtapose au bonheur et au plaisir de leurs parents" (3) [The misfortune and agony of the newly marrieds juxtaposes with the happiness and pleasure of their parents]. Due to age, lack of education and personal agency the girls remain helpless. But faced with this pressure from her mother, Zénabou resolves: "Peut-etre que j'aurais mieux fait de ne pas me marier" (Mbuko 46) [Maybe I would do better to not get married] (My translation). The emergence of this resolve marks a critical moment of self-assertion, even if it remains precarious within the patriarchal household.

Mbuko further complicates the social forces surrounding Zénabou's fate through her encounter with Fatimah, a childhood friend already married. The dialogue between them reveals how patriarchal ideology is not only imposed by elderly people, but also circulated among women of the same generation. Fatimah's advice rests on economic pragmatism: marrying El-hadj guarantees that Zénabou "ne mourra pas de faim" [will not die of hunger], equating survival with submission (Mbuko 47). Zénabou's experience reflects a more direct form of coercion. Unlike Ezinma, she has no illusions about education after marriage. Her fate is sealed by familial authority and cultural expectations. Zénabou eventually acquiesces to the early marriage and exemplifies what Deniz Kandiyoti theorizes as "patriarchal bargaining". This implies that women comply with oppressive systems as a

survival strategy within restrictive social structures (Kandiyoti 274-75).

The World Health Organization (WHO) concerns on child marriage foregrounds multi-dimensional impact of the practice on maternal and child health. Zénabou becomes a victim of this practice, losing her baby, suffering from VVF and is rejected by her husband and her both parents. The normalization of early marriage and female silence in both texts reflect what Pierre Bourdieu terms symbolic violence, a form of domination so deeply internalized that it appears natural and unquestionable (Bourdieu 1-2). This is the juncture where the two protagonists find themselves presently. Whether there can be a rupture with this phase depends on the level of awakening of their critical consciousness and the expansion of their capabilities.

From Submission to Empowerment

Empowerment in Nkoro and Mbuko is neither rebellion for its own sake nor a wholesale rejection of culture. Rather, it involves a re-negotiation of social norms where tradition is interrogated and selectively transformed. In Nkoro's *Ma vie m'appartient*, it is observed that Ezinma's resistance does not entail a rejection of family itself but a redefinition of familial authority and this echoes Nkiru Nzegwu's view that African feminism seeks reform from within cultural systems rather than a wholesale abandonment of it (Nzegwu 41-43). Her empowerment is thus, articulated through her voice and decision-making

which is the act of appropriating of her life, implicit in the title of the text, "*Ma vie m'appartient*" [My life belongs to me]. By reclaiming control over her education, work, marriage, the protagonist disrupts the cultural script that binds women's futures to patience and submission. Nkoro completes Ezinma's journey of empowerment by juxtaposing personal agency with the intersecting forces of patriarchy and ethnic conservatism. Ezinma returns to her parents' home, this time, accompanied by her fiancé, Dare Ajayi, a Yoruba engineer. Unlike her earlier return as a repudiated widow, she now appears as an economically independent, educated adult who claims agency over her life choices. Her parents resist her choice with patriarchal entitlement, rejecting categorically her interethnic marriage. But Ezinma gives a well-articulated speech on her feminist self-awareness. She recalls: « Je vous rappelle que j'ai vingt-cinq ans. J'ai fait une erreur grave quand j'avais seize ans. Cette-fois-ci, je dois décider que faire avec ma vie. Si, en choisissant Dare comme un mari, j'ai fait un mauvais choix, c'est mon affaire ... » (82). [I want to remind you that I am twenty-five years old. I made a grave mistake when I was sixteen years old. This time, I should decide what to do with my life. If in choosing Dare as a husband, I made a bad choice, it is my business.] (My translation). At this juncture, education, age and professional competence converge to legitimize consent and choice as moral rights rather than privileges.

The later stages of Zénabou's recovery mark a decisive consolidation of empowerment in Mbuko's *Chaque chose en son temps*. Through Dr Mariama, Mbuko highlights how women empowerment often begins with survival itself particularly in contexts where early marriage and reproductive exploitation prevail. In earlier moments in the text decisions concerning her body, education and marriage were made by parents, emissaries and husband. But Zénabou now explicitly articulates her own aspirations. Her declaration to resume her studies and enroll in nursing school signals a profound shift from passive endurance to conscious self-direction. Dr Mariama's response: « Le choix est à toi, Zénabou » (p. 87). [The choice is yours, Zénabou] functions as an affirmation of autonomy. This moment is not merely symbolic. Dr Mariama's assumption of full responsibility for Zénabou's medical care demonstrates that empowerment is tied to material support. The successful completion of her nursing training and employment in the same hospital as Dr Mariama's complete her empowerment. The institution of the hospital becomes a site of rebirth, ethical commitment and continuity, where empowered women mentor and multiply one another.

Education and Empowerment

Education in these texts is not merely formal but a broader process of critical consciousness echoing Paulo Freire's conception of education as a practice of freedom through which the oppressed develop critical

consciousness and reclaim agency over their lives (Freire 67). Nkoro's *Ma vie m'appartient* and Mbuko's *Chaque chose en son temps* portray empowerment not only as an individual escape but as having collective implications. In both texts, female protagonists do not achieve agency alone, rather their transformation is enabled through intervention by some educated women who embody alternative models of femininity, grounded in autonomy, intellectual capacity and ethical responsibility. Zénabou's encounter with Dr Mariama redefines education as emancipation rather than a social threat (Mbuko 85-87). Her reinvention through education and service demonstrates what Molar Ogundipe describes as African women's capacity for "critical transformation" whereby education enables women to reconstruct identity beyond patriarchal prescriptions (Ogundipe 11-13).

In *Ma vie m'appartient* Chika's own university training gives her economic independence. She sponsors Ezinma's return to school enabling her to interrogate the gender norms she had previously internalized. Chika's voice represents the voice of educated resistance and counter-socialization. The narratives in both texts affirm bell hook's assertion that education enables women to transgress domestic confinement and claim social visibility beyond patriarchal expectations (hooks 3-4).

Mbuko in *Chaque chose en son temps* presents a parallel dynamic through the character of Dr Mariama, the female physician who rescues

Zénabou when she is abandoned and near to death. Her capability through her own education enables her intervention to Zénabou, restoring her bodily integrity and providing her access to professional training as a nurse (Mbuko 87). Health and education intercept here as capabilities, without which agency is impossible. Ultimately, despite their adversities, both protagonists reclaim agency and social mobility through education. Ezinma's return to school culminates in her becoming a pilot. Likewise, Zénabou's transformation into a trained nurse enables her to also become a caregiver to other women in similar maternal circumstances.

Comparative Theoretical Discussion

This section offers a synthesis of how both authors conceptualize the passage from submission to empowerment through the intertwined lenses of gendered social conditioning, education and female agency. Both plays: *Ma vie m'appartient* by Nkoro and *Chaque chose en son temps* by Mbuko stage a shared movement: from the internalization of patriarchal norms to the reconstruction of the self. But there is a differing in the pathways through which this transformation is achieved.

From a postcolonial feminist perspective, both texts depict patriarchy not as a static tradition but as a system reproduced through family, community and economic pressures. Nkoro presents Ezinma's embrace of early marriage as being motivated by wealth and fear of social stigma. This exemplifies what Deniz Kandiyoti terms

"patriarchal bargaining", a strategic submission to gender norms in exchange for security. Similarly, in *Chaque chose en son temps*, Mbuko presents Zénabou's forced marriage as a reflection of the collaboration between economic vulnerability and communal expectations to stifle the woman's choice. Molar Ogundipe-Leslie's insight that gender ideologies are often reproduced within the domestic sphere even as it limits women's possibilities is corroborated in both cases where mothers become key transmitters of these norms.

Both texts present a rupture from submission which is achieved by education and female mentorship. These operate as mechanisms of raising consciousness and social repositioning. Ezinma relocates with Chika and subsequently return to school. This offers her awareness and a shift from passive acceptance to self-assertion. Zénabou's encounter with Dr Mariama equally initiates a process of bodily and intellectual recovery. This leads to her transformation from a silenced subject into an agent capable of redefining her life trajectory: "J'ai hate de reprendre mes etudes. Je voudrais aller à l'Ecole des infirmières" (Mbuko 87). [I am in a hurry to resume my studies. I would like to go to nursing school] (My translation). In both cases, empowerment is measureable not in the abstract but by concrete opportunities, choices and achievements.

However, the novels diverge in their modalities of empowerment. We see the divergence through the illumination of Obioma Nnaemeka's

concept of nego-feminism, which conceptualizes women's agency as a process of negotiation, compromise and strategic accommodation rather than outright confrontation (Nnaemeka 357-385). In Mbuko's narrative, Zénabou's trajectory reflects this negotiated empowerment: her recovery and professional development occur within institutional and relational frameworks that do not entirely reject cultural norms but subtly rework them in ways that allow her to reclaim dignity and purpose. On the other hand, Nkoro's portrays Ezinma in light of direct resistance. She ultimately rejects patriarchal authority, challenging ethnic expectations and asserts her autonomy in both career and marriage. The trajectories of both protagonists suggest that empowerment in African women's writing operates along a continuum, from negotiation to confrontation and thereby deconstructing a monolithic understanding of feminist resistance.

Conclusion

This article examined the trajectories of Ezinma and Zénabou in *Ma vie m'appartient* and *Chaque chose en son temps* respectively, to demonstrate how contemporary African women writers stage the movement from submission to empowerment. This discourse was x-rayed through the intersecting dynamics of gendered social conditioning, education and female agency. Both narratives depict that patriarchal norms manifested in early marriage, polygamy, reproductive and restrictive expectations of the womenfolk are not merely external

constraints but are often internalized and reproduced within the family and community. In this sense the novels corroborate the insights of Molaria Ogundipe and Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí who emphasize the socio-cultural construction of gender hierarchies in African contexts.

However, the study has also shown that these structures are not unsurmountable. Through the encounters of the protagonists with education, mentorship and alternative models of womanhood, both texts articulate a process of transformation which shifts from a passive conformity to a decisive self-determination. Thanks in addition to feminist solidarity which in these cases is neither rhetorical nor abstract but institutional, financial and sustained. In the lens of Paulo Freire, this shift reflects the development of critical consciousness, whereby individuals come to recognize and challenge the forces that shape their subordination. Furthermore, Amartya Sen's capability approach throws the light on how empowerment in these narratives is anchored on the expansion of real opportunities: access to education, professional training and freedom to make meaningful life choices.

The comparative analysis highlights both convergence and divergence in the two texts under study. Nkoro's model of empowerment is rooted in resistance, autonomy and individual self-assertion leading to Ezinma's professional success and marital self-determination, whereas Mbuko emphasizes a more relational

and restorative pathway. This is evidenced by Zénabou's empowerment emerging through Dr Mariama's care, institutional (hospital) support: accommodation, feeding, medical care and training; and her eventual role as a caregiver. Despite these differences, both authors speak with one voice in their critique of gendered social norms that confine women to reproductive and domestic roles while insisting on education as a transformative tool. Through the integration of African feminist criticism with interdisciplinary frameworks of capability and critical consciousness, this paper lends a voice to ongoing debates on gender and empowerment in African literary studies. It argues that African women's writing not only exposes the mechanisms of female subjugation but also reimagines empowerment as a dynamic and ongoing process that entails the expansion of capabilities, the raising of critical awareness and the assertion of women's right to define their own lives beyond the constraints of gendered social conditioning.

Works Cited

- Amadiume, Ifi. *Male Daughters, Female Husbands*. Zed Books, 1987.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Masculine Domination*. Translated by Richard Nice, Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*. Routledge, 1990.

From Submission To Empowerment: Gendered Social Conditioning, Education And Female Agency In Ihechi Nkoro's Ma Vie m'Appartient And Lynn Mbuko's Chaque Chose En Son Temps

De Beauvoir, Simone. *The second Sex*. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila

Malovany- Chevalier, Vintage Books (US) 2009.

Egege, Letitia. "Analyse narrative de la domination masculine sur la femme dans *Munyaal et Walaande* de Djaïli Amadou Amal in *Jos Journal of Foreign Languages and Literatures*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 1-15.

Emecheta, Buchi. *The Joys of Motherhood*. Heinemann, 1980.

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos, 30th Anniversary ed, Continuum, 2000.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress*. Routledge, 1994.

Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Bargaining with Patriarchy", *Gender & Society*, vol. 2, no. 3, 1988, pp. 274-90.

Mama, Amina. *Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender and Subjectivity*. Ist ed. Routledge, 1995.

Mbuko, Lynn. *Chaque chose en son temps*. 2nd Ed. Aba, Lynnette Publishers. 2004.

Nkoro, Ihechi. *Ma vie m'appartient*. Okigwe, FASMEN communications. 2013.

Nnaemeka, Obioma. "Negotiating Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing and Pruning Africa's Way." *Signs: Journal Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 29, no 2, 2004, pp. 357-385.

Nzegwu, Nkiru. *Family Matters*. State University of New York Press, 2006.

Ogundipe-Leslie, Molar. *Re-Creating Ourselves: African Women and Critical Transformations*. Africa World Press, 1994.

Oyèwùmí, Oyèrónké. *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern speak?" *Marxism and the Illinoise Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Press, 1988. Pp.271-313.

World Health Organization. *Child Marriage: A Global Health Concern*. World Health Organization, 2014.