

Domestic Violence in Nigeria: a Literary Perspective in Ben Binebai's *Karena's Cross* and Femi Osofisan's *Altine's Wrath*

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Abstract

This study examines the dramatization of the manifestations of Domestic violence against Women in the Niger Delta (Coastal South-South) and the Southwestern part of Nigeria. Using Ben Binebai's *Karena's Cross* and Femi Osofisan's *Altine's Wrath*, the study names the various violence unleashed by husbands on their female partners in these areas of the country to include, verbal abuse, battering, abuse by mistresses and traditional practices. With an informed rubric of domestic violence, the study further identifies child marriage as a major influence in domestic violence against married women. The selected male playwrights and the ideological content of the plays, however, ignite a paradox as their message contrasts allegations against their gender as perpetrators of domestic violence. The study, therefore, demonstrates the creative fervor of male playwrights to condemn the acts of domestic violence against wives in the Nigerian context. It concludes that dramatic presentations that condemn domestic violence can rewrite the narrative in these areas where wives are seen as second-class objects meant to serve their men's interests and desires.

1. Introduction

The prevalence of domestic violence in Nigerian homes came to a head in April 2022 when the popular Nigerian songwriter and gospel nightingale—Osinachi Nwachukwu reportedly died as a result of battering by her husband (Ugowe 2022; *The Nation* 2022). The social media was awash with the news and scholarship on domestic violence had another victim to write about: a music star and inspirational figure who had widely influenced Nigerians, and beyond that, Africans and Christians across the globe (BBC 2022; Agbo 2022). News had it that Osinachi had been abused for years by her husband, but she was reluctant to quit the marriage, given her belief that the husband would eventually change (Alieke 2022; Punch 2022; Umeh 2022). Osinachi's case is just one of such incidences of domestic violence in marriages in Nigeria, which often result in physical harm to, or death of, the victim. It is, however, unfortunate that the rife of these incidences has not attracted enough attention towards eradicating it. By exploring these incidences from a literary perspective, the current study seeks to bring to the fore the untold and inhumane experience some Nigerian women are subjected to in matrimony.

In his research, Akintunde Ojo Sunday (2022), in validating this claim, catalogues many reported cases of domestic violence in marriage and concludes that the wife is almost often at the receiving end, while the husbands are the violators. He notes the case of a man arrested by the Lagos State Police Command in March 2021 for allegedly beating his wife, Julianah, to death. He also recounts the case of a man identified as Emeh Kalu from Afikpo south local government area of Ebonyi State (South-eastern part of Nigeria) who was arrested in December 2021 for allegedly contracting the abduction and killing of his wife in order to inherit her property, money, and thriving business. Akintunde Ojo, Sunday, completes his geographic survey of domestic violence in Nigeria with an incident from the Northern part of the country, where one Bello Muhe killed his 25-year-old wife, Husse Ali, for allegedly having an amorous relationship with other men in the neighbourhood. So, in this article, I employ a critical literary examination of Ben Binebai's *Karena Cross* (2018) and Femi Osofisan's *Altine's Wrath* (2002) as a tool to highlight the plight of women in an abusive marriage. To validate the essential role of drama in highlighting and addressing social issues, the study echoes

Utoh-Ezeajugh and Ogbonna (2013, p.13), position on the social value of drama, “the selected scenes of everyday life in families, villages, communities, social structures, micro and macro societies in African drama reveal that there are lessons to be learnt from...such dramatic pieces. The utilitarian art of the dramatic arts is thus encompassing and because of its capacity to communicate, teach and make social comments, visionaries manipulate the medium as a change agent”.

Uto-Ezeajugh and Ogbonna aver that such dramatic pieces convey lessons and serve as means of social commentary on pressing issues and ideological concerns like domestic violence. In view of this, it becomes obvious that the selected dramatic texts of the current study have not enjoyed satisfactory critical attention with regards to domestic violence being experienced by the wife in Nigeria. Epochi-Olise (2019), in a postcolonial overview of Binebai’s *Karena’s Cross* berates traditional and cultural practices of patriarchal African societies as terrorism on the subaltern woman. While the study was an account of patriarchal injustice on women in general in Africa and not essentially in the context of marriage, the study, however, contrasts with the position of Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997, p.156), who notes that “colonization...was also a process by which male hegemony was instituted and legitimized in African society.” Similarly, Onyejizu and Chukwu (2020) explore the place of self-emancipation and education in *Karena’s Cross* as a way of resisting patriarchal tendencies in such societies where they are practised. Moreover, Onookome Okome (2002), deals with loss of moral values in public and private lives in Osofisan’s *Altines Wrath* while Bose Afolayan (2009), examined the anger of women in the same text. The current study in situating domestic violence against wives in the plays further explores its peculiarities in the different geographic settings that informed them. It is also worthy of note that the authors are both males indicating the paradigm shift the often-alleged gender of domestic violence desire over the subject. The study thus focuses on the female partner who often is at the receiving end of this violence in Nigeria and seeks to name the varying manifestations of domestic violence unleashed on them in their home. The study, therefore, adopts a critical examination of the select plays, using an informed rubric of domestic violence to validate the depth of the menace as explored in the selected plays.

2. Domestic violence and Gender based violence: a review

This study treats domestic violence as a subset of gender-based violence (GBV). GBV is, therefore, the generic name for a host of gender-related offences. The study seeks to understand how this offence is unleashed on the female partner in marriage, which is referred to as domestic violence. The United Nations (UN, 1993) has further described GBV as Violence Against Women (VAW). It delineates the offence as “any act of gender-based violence (GBV) that causes or is likely to cause physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (UN 1993, 3).

Chinwe Patricia Iloka (2022), however, adds to the understanding of VAW or GBV thus: sexual violence, rape, domestic violence, and harmful traditional practices. Sexual violence and rape, according to Iloka, include sexual abuse, harassment and forcing a girl or woman into sexual intercourse at the workplace, in a marriage or in any other context. Domestic violence includes women battering (intentional or direct application of force to another person resulting in harm), acid bath, murder, psychological violence and economic disempowerment. (Iloka 2022). Iloka indicated that battering may result to murder. And lastly, on harmful traditional practices, Iloka describes these practices as including “female genital mutilation, child marriage, forced marriage, widowhood rites, widow disinheritance, male-child preference, and girl-child neglect.” (Iloka 2022, 65)

The distinction offered by Oyefeso (2021), on the nuanced difference between domestic violence and GBV is worthy of note in the current study. Oyefeso notes that although both are mutually inclusive to the extent that they cause harm to their victims, “domestic violence is setting specific but not gender specific, as domestic violence can apply to anyone irrespective of their gender, *while* GBV is gender specific but not

setting specific because it focuses on violence against one gender irrespective of the setting where such violence is perpetrated.” (Oyefeso 2021, 2) The primary texts under study, however, establish the mutuality of both conceptions of domestic violence and GBV because the violence recorded in the texts happens within marriage, which is regarded as domestic and inflicted on the wife. It shall however be treated as domestic violence in this study as Iloka and Oyefeso’s delineations shall be used to tease out these ideological concerns in the plays.

3. *Karena’s Cross and Altine’s Wrath: A Synopsis*

Ben Binebai the author of *Karena’s Cross* is a Nigerian playwright and literary critic who has contributed immensely to the creative and scholarly traditions and trends of the theatre genre of his generation. He was born in 1966 in Iduwini Kingdom, Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State. He has in his kitty fifty-one created plays including three solo plays, and has directed several plays on the Wilberforce Island stage (Ojemba Magazine 2023). Binebai in his monodrama *Karena Cross* brings on stage the crude and strange childhood and marital experience of *Karena*. *Karena* is born in a fictionalized community named Owei-ama in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. *Karena* at a tender age of thirteen, is subjected to an excruciating Female Genital Mutilation, FGM and subsequently forced into marriage to her father’s friend. *Karena* recounts her traumatizing experience in matrimony to reflect the inhumane experience the girl child and some women still undergo. This echoes the position of Mabel Ewuerhoma in her review of the play when she notes that “The deep monodrama focuses on concerns that are not confined to the Niger Delta Region; but any community in which there is injustice and inequitable treatment meted out to its girl child or female folk” (Binebai 2018).

Femi Osofisan the author of *Altine’s wrath* is also a Nigerian playwright, essayist, actor, critic, poet, novelist, editor and newspaper columnist. who was born on 16 June 1946 at Eruwon, in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria. Osofisan has written and produced more than seventy plays, five volumes of poetry, four novels and several collections of essays. In *Altine’s Wrath*, Osofisan takes us deep into the diversity of domestic violence between husbands and wives in Nigeria and precisely in the southwestern part of the country. Osofisan dramatises the abuse of women in marriage and at the same time offers a solution. The one-act play opens in the sitting room of Mr Lawal Jatau, a permanent secretary at the Ministry of Lands in one of the Nigerian states. He is expecting one of his dubious business partners to sign a huge contract which is later revealed to give him twenty per cent of the ownership of one of the most successful companies in the country. Lawal is purchasing a portion of the company with money stolen from the ministry. His mistress, Mariam, arrives unannounced, bringing along her luggage in response to Lawal’s request that she moves in with his family. The conversation between both partners reveals that Lawal’s wife, *Altine*, who is the heroine of the play is solely treated as an object whose value is worthless and replaceable. Lawal describes her as a dumb female goat, beats her and emotionally taunts her. The arrival of Dr Aina, a former classmate of Mr Lawal, complicates the plot as her plea for the release of the lands confiscated by Lawal’s ministry falls on deaf ears and further depicts Lawal as a personification of perpetrators of domestic violence. The ordeal of *Altine* and Dr Aina distinguishes the play as a true reflection of women undergoing domestic violence in Nigeria.

4. Domestic violence in *Karena Cross* and *Altines wrath* (Naming it)

The conflation of the causes and manifestation of domestic violence is a unique feature that distinguishes the creative investment of Ben Binebai in *Karena Cross* from most of the creative works on this subject in Nigeria. This is as the playwright brings on stage some traditional practices that needed to have been effaced in the twenty-first century but still subsist in the Niger Delta part of Nigeria. Prime among these is under-age marriage and less value for the girl-child education. Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997, p.132), in her *Invention of the Woman*, berates these traditional practices alongside the consequences of colonialism which she said only aims to make the girl child ‘look dainty and attractive, ready to become wives and helpmates of potentially powerful men.’ Oyewumi’s observation that traditionally parents prefer to educate their sons

instead of daughters gives us the background to the suffering of Karena as her father Nemughan deprives her of her fundamental right to education. In his words,

Your education is not important.
All your sisters were given out
In marriage less than thirteen years.
They are in their husband's houses
Taking care of their husbands and children...

You women are empty possessions.
Training you is waste of money and time.
When you get married, no one
Will know you are still my daughter.
My name will be lost. Why must
I waste my money training you? (Binebai, p.6)

Following such a decision is the heartless and primitive under-age marriage which Karena is subjected to. While this confirms the objectification of the girl child in some cultural settings, it however explains the root of cases of domestic violence. This is as most of these girls who are forced into early marriage are not valued and what follows are the manifestation of the different forms of domestic violence, we have in the society today. As earlier mentioned, that both GBV and domestic violence interconnect, we see in *Karena's Cross Iloka's* (2022), delineation of Gender based violence. Karena in the play is exposed to the harmful traditional practices of Female Genital Mutilation, child marriage, forced marriage and widow disinheritance.

Right at the age of thirteen, Karena's father, Nemughan handed her over in marriage after an FGM to his friend, who is a very old man. Karena further suffers psychological trauma in a polygamous home as she recounts that "... I lost my husband from the day I was forced to marry him. I was dehumanised by his people, even before he died" (Binebai, 2). Karena also suffers from battery as her husband Daubri unleashes on her several blows and physical injuries. Karena describes this as endemic to the Owei-ama village where "men freely and physically inflicted injuries on the body of women for little mistakes; ... and even mercilessly beat up their wives for Cooking an unsavoury food" (Binebai, p.26). Her ordeal as a punching bag with her husband in a helpless bout demonstrates what other women she represents undergo in their marriage. In one of such violent attack on her by her husband, Karena explains that,

Karena: Daubri opened his wide palms and
Slapped me thunderously. I was punched,
Brutally headed and brushed down
With ferocious and electrocuting kicks....
I was beaten mercilessly with
Demonic detestation.
I groaned and fainted.
Neither my mother in-law nor people
Living around us came to my rescue.
I became a punching bag
In the marital ring of Daubri. (Binebai, 22-23)

Unfortunately, none of the other wives comes to Karena's rescue showing a surreptitious disregard of the author for polygamy. Of course, this position is obvious in the play as other wives serves the husbands domestic and sexual needs whenever karena is menstruating or beaten by the husbands. The place of responsibility and willingness to reconcile when the man is at fault is thus limited in a polygamous marriage as the wife must come back as a stooge to beg the man even when she is right. Her experience during

menstruation is also another form of domestic violence as she is relegated to sleep outside and not inside the house, as sleeping in the house is culturally regarded as despoiling the tradition in Owei-ama. Hence, once she runs into the house because of attempted rape, she is said to have raised a false alarm, and her penalty is to undergo a ritual to cleanse the desecrated house.

Another form of domestic violence explored in *Karena Cross* is the wicked subjection of the wife to hard labour. This also falls under the psychological violence category of domestic violence highlighted by Iloka. Binebai depicts this condition in the Niger Delta as heartrending for the wife, which ought to be treasured. Binebai presents a society which shifts the responsibility of the men to the women with the experience of Karena, whose husband delights in a harem of wives who work to meet the financial needs of his family. According to Karena,

Karena: ...Three months after my marriage
I was involved in carrying palm wine jugs
To the town from the forest
And to the point where the palm wine
Was distilled into native gin.
One afternoon I fainted while
Carrying a bigger jug of palm wine
To the town from the forest..(Binenai, p.19)

Karena's condition attracts more sympathy when one considers her age as a thirteen-year-old teenager and that three months earlier, she was subjected to the painful scalpel of the older women, who carried out FGM on her. In Karena's community, men and children are taken care of, while men are connoisseurs who pass judgement on the women's efforts. The authorial vision of condemnation of this act is lucid in the development of the character of Karena, who outrightly resists such practices. At the demise of her husband—Daubri, when the reader would have thought Karena would embrace a level of peace, it becomes clear that a new chapter of violence which Iloka (2022, 65) describes as “widow disinheritance” has just been opened for her. Binebai digs deeper into this domestic violence in the Niger Delta area as Karena recounts her ordeal:

Karena: ...My mother-in-law and
Accused me of killing her son.
Anyone that tried to exonerate
Me was joined in the murder charge.
What do you expect?
In the leopard's court of justice
A goat is always pronounced guilty.
The day my husband's body was
To be committed to mother earth,
The allegation that I
Killed him intensified.
The elders of the family then resolved
That to prove my innocence,
I must drink the water with which my
Husband's body was washed....
That was another challenging
Moment of my life (Binebai p. 25-25)

While Karena drinks the water to prove her innocence, she is further denied access to any of Daubri's property. Instead, she is given out as an inheritance to Daubri's elder brother. This act is what Iloka describes as economic disempowerment for the woman as Karena is being disempowered alongside other wives and denied access to their husband's property while the property is shared among his family members. Meanwhile,

Daubri's new block building is completed through the sweat of the hard labour of the wives. Karena sums up her ordeal in Daubri's house that:

Karena: I was the youngest and smallest
In the harem of wives.
It was such a home where I was abused
As a child, as a woman and
As a wife and as marital colleague.
My life was a voluminous book of tragedy
Every day was a page of that book
That punished my soul (Binebai pp. 18-19).

A pensive look at Binebai's portrayal of the domestic violence unleashed on Karena reveals that so many women are undergoing similar ordeals while being silenced by allegiance to traditional or cultural beliefs that to impose how the women must behave in marriage. The author obviously exposes these trends in the Niger delta area with Karena's condition and surreptitiously indict the men and culture of that society as violating and abusing the rights of their female partner.

Femi Osofisan, however, in *Altine's Wrath*, brings us to the South-Western part of the country occupied by the Yorubas to unravel other complexions of domestic violence as experienced by the wife. The portrayal of domestic violence in *Altine's Wrath* not only demonstrates that it is indeed a variant of GBV but goes on to depict how a woman can, in fact, be pitted against another woman in cases of domestic violence. Thus, Osofisan not only depicts scenes of battery, but he goes on to show how, for instance, mistresses known as 'side chicks' in Nigeria, may also be complicit in domestic violence. In this story Altine is physically and psychologically at the receiving end of the blows of Lawal, the corrupt permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Lands and Housing. Lawal is intelligent but exceptionally devilish, and an ideal personification of husbands who engage in women battering. He is also an ingrate like Daubri in *Karena's Cross* who represents husbands who betray their wives despite the emotional and physical investment their wives have contributed to the marriage and their children. For example, Altine worked hard to sponsor Lawal's education. Now she is being used by Lawal as a cover-up to sign his illegal contracts. One of the scandals Lawal has perpetrated in the ministry is snatching lands belonging to some peasant farmers, represented by Malam Onene and Baba Audu. This incident is central to the play and reveals Lawal's true character. Malam Onene and Baba Audu, however, approach Dr Aina, a human rights lawyer who just returned from abroad and happens to be Lawal's erstwhile classmate, to help intervene in their case.

While buttressing through Lawal that a character who personifies the twin evils of greed for money and adultery is susceptible to committing domestic violence, Osofisan goes on to reveal one of the paradoxes of domestic violence and GBV. With a focus on 'women against women', Osofisan demonstrates how extramarital affairs often become a causative factor of this menace. Lawal keeps several mistresses, prominent among them being Mariam. He describes them as "emergency contractors who display their physical credentials" (Osofisan p.11) for his consideration. Mariam has advised Lawal to drive out his wife, Altine. Lawal, however, does not comply because of the cruel economic purpose Altine serves. Mariam's impromptu arrival at Lawal's house shows the impact of such a relationship and the decisions and promises some men make to their wives and mistresses, which are instrumental to their callous behaviour at home. This is depicted in the scene below:

Mariam: It's your wife isn't it? She's still here?
Lawal: [Embarrassed] Well...
Mariam: Lawal! After all your promises!
Lawal: Listen, I—
Mariam: I've warned you! I'm not for any of these your polygamy business. You've

got to choose.

Lawal: She'll go, don't worry. After all you didn't force me before I made the promise.

I'm just waiting for—

Mariam: For what? Tell me, after all these months! (Osofisan p.4)

We see that while Iloka (2022, p.66) identifies “patriarchal tendencies” among the cultural factors that contribute to domestic violence, she does not talk about the so-called “women against women syndrome”, a situation where a mistress puts pressure on her partner to divorce the ‘home wife’. Osofisan from the play under study seems to demonstrate that when a man enjoys comfort from another woman outside his matrimonial home, the chances are that he treats the woman at home as trash. Otherwise, how do we explain the savage battering of Altine during Mariam’s visit? We are first introduced to the psychological violence Lawal unleashes on Altine. In his effort to pacify Mariam, he discloses that “Altine has her own room there, at the back of the house. And I’ve not allowed her to step into my room for over three years now. Okay? So, you can stay with me. Stop fussing!” (Osofisan p.4) This reveals what many women suffering from domestic violence in the southwestern part of Nigeria go through when their husbands have mistresses outside the home. The trauma continues with Lawal’s treatment of his wife like a housemaid as he commands her to hang up Mariam’s coat, cook for the very woman who is a threat to her home, calls her monkey, dumb goat and illiterate, and forces her to kneel to greet Mariam. Showing her reluctance to greet Mariam, Lawal throws the first punch at her: “**Lawal:** Why are you staring there like an idiot? The least you can do is say good evening to her? Go on, greet her! [*Altine stares, silent. Lawal angrily hits her*] I say greet her, you dumb female goat! Down! On your knees! [*Altine falls and crawls as he kicks her. She drools in the mouth*] (Osofisan p. 6)”.

From this demeaning act, the reader is introduced to how Lawal meets Altine and a painful background to the abuse she suffers in his home. Like Karena, Altine comes into Lawal’s life through child marriage preceded by an unforeseen circumstance. Her father had been killed in a riot, and Lawal’s father, who is a friend to her family, takes her up. While Karena in *Karena’s Cross* is tricked into marriage by her father, Altine, on her part, is a victim of circumstance. This is because her father would have sponsored her education if he was alive. Altine enters the marriage as a child and her education is terminated as soon as the engagement is contracted. Altine’s future can, therefore, be easily inferred from the onset of that engagement. She has been conscripted into slavery. Altine buttresses this after her fake dumbness that “I was just a slave...so you bought me to bear your children and scrub your floor and wash your clothes...Or when it’s your muscles you feel like testing. I lay down meekly and take the blows.” (Osofisan p. 30) Thus, to Lawal, marrying her was a favour; hence, he could do whatever pleases him with her. Osofisan also demonstrates through the play that domestic violence can manifest in the form of verbal abuse, harassment, battery, and nagging. We see this in Lawal’s outburst when his crockery falls off from Altine,

Lawal: [*He is suddenly interrupted by a scream as a plate falls from the hands of Altine and shatters. He is enraged*]. What! What’s that? You stupid, blundering imbecile! You broke that expensive plate! Why are you always so clumsy, eh? I’ll teach you a lesson today! [*More to impress Mariam, he takes out a belt and whips her. Altine falls on her knees but takes the blows without even trying to protect herself. He hits her again, but the woman only keeps staring at him, her face impassive. Disturbed, he retreats*]. Get out of my sight! Tafi mana! (Osofisan, p.9)

Lawal is so brutal that he still broods over the fact that Altine does not cry as she used to cry whenever he hits her. Another form of domestic violence Osofisan demonstrates in the play is the treatment of the female partner as a slave. This is obvious in a conversation between Lawal and Dr Aina Jibo who comes to plead the cause of the now landless peasants. Dr Aina, who is a divorcee and has experienced domestic violence immediately suspects that Lawal is responsible for Altine’s dumbness. In expressing her sympathy for Altine’s condition, to which Lawal is indifferent, Dr Aina exclaims:

Aina: Yes, and I hope it wasn't you anyway.

Lawal: Me, how?

Aina: who caused it, I mean. You men can be terrible. I know now from experience. You all think marriage is the modern version of the Slave Trade (Osofisan p.13).

Although Lawal explains that Altine goes mute after he reproached her on a particular day, he soon changes the subject and resorts to calling Dr Aina a feminist who “won't get far with that kind of talk in this society” (Osofisan p.13) if she is going to indict men who engage in domestic violence as perpetrators of modern-day slavery. Lawal obviously cannot deny this allegation as he goes on to prove it when Dr Aina further describes him as one who has grown completely rotten for unjustly taking the land of the farmers. He replies,

Lawal: You're in the wrong country, let me tell you! You and your type, you have no place here! And in case you've forgotten. I'll remind you! Women here don't dare raise their voice where men are speaking! And you'd better get that back into your head!...listen, men like me, we control...we snap our fingers, and women far more important than you fall on their knees in obeisance! And you say “rotten”! Look here woman, you are no longer in school, and you'd better wake up!...I own companies! Lands! Houses! Cars and horses! I employ hundreds! Women like you and better than you kill themselves to get into my bed! And you say “rotten” and you come here, Mrs. Doctor, to...to... Wake up! We have come to the age of fire and thunder, where only people like me beat their chest! (Osofisan p.18)

The treatment of the female partner as a second-class individual is established above. Osofisan berates the male-centric idea that sees the female gender as a second-class object who is only there to serve men's selfish interests and desires. With the rise in cases of these abuses, feminist writers and gender-sensitive authors are not resting on their laurels in decrying this inhuman treatment of women. Osofisan, like Binebai, therefore, scores high by presenting these odds, which many husbands do not see as an abuse of the rights of their wives. Highlighting these oddities on stage is therefore apposite in the quest to end domestic violence

5-Conclusion

The treatment of domestic violence in Nigerian literature by male authors, as explored in the current study, signals the positive effect of the advocacies against gender violence in Nigeria. Coming out to condemn these acts with literary fervour, as seen in Ben Binebai's *Karena's Cross* and Femi Osofisan *Altine's Wrath*, has further thrown weight behind the need to end this menace against women in marriage. The study, by highlighting the various manifestations of domestic violence across the Niger-delta and southwestern part of Nigeria, also proves that these cases are prevalent across the country. The two authors, while dramatizing the negative role of mistresses, verbal abuse, battering and traditional practices that must be jettisoned in twenty-first century Nigeria, also indicate the need to fight child marriage either as rooted in the culture or by circumstance. Both authors also depict the conflation of domestic violence and harmful traditional practices, which, according to Patricia Iloka (2022), are subsets of GBV. They show that the abused wife suffers from domestic violence (battery, psychological violence, economic disempowerment, etc.), which is setting-specific and GBV, which is gender specific as the abused characters are women. At the same time, the context of their ordeal is marriage. By naming these manifestations of domestic violence in Nigeria and presenting them in dramatic pieces, the playwrights go beyond the menace as seen in the news to also dramatize the causes in such a way that nauseate and force everybody and the authorities to see the need to end domestic violence against the female partner in Nigeria collectively.

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