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Representation of Gender and Sexuality in Modern Comedy

Gender and sexuality in modern comedy is all about the unrecognition of women in the society. It is more like a feminist movement. Women are like a second class citizens that are not recognized in society. They only play their roles in the home while men play their roles in the public. Women are not allowed to talk in the public, they are expected to sit back at home and do house chores and take care of the home and children and also give birth.

In *Wives Revolt* by JP Clark, we see the unsavory consequences of the traditional condonation of gender discrimination in African societies. The play at end, the play is able to convey the social lessons intended. An oil company had given monetary compensation to the Erhuwaren community for depriving them of their land through oil exploration. The money was shared into three parts: one part goes to the elders, the other part to the men, then the last part goes to women. The women are against the uneven distribution of the money and protest that the money be shared evenly, they felt that the sharing was unfair since the elders are also men. They hold a meeting among themselves and protest against the unfair

treatment meted on them. Some husbands confirm it that their wives had started turning into goats to torment them. Rather than calm the angry women or wives and do what the women want, they go ahead to ban all the goats in the community that the women rare, while the pigs the men rare remain in the community. The decide to march into protest. They decide to live the town entirely for the men who has also not recognize the importance of women in the home and in the society.

The characters in the play are just three. Okoro, Koko, Okoro's wife and Idama. Okoro who is the town crier and husband of Koko, is the one who announced that all the goats should be banished from the town and when is wife who acts as the representatives of the other wives, tells him it is unfair, he ignores her and went ahead to catch any goat he sees in the town. Eventually when the women decide to go on protest and march round villages, Okoro says he don't care, that they are free to go for all he care. Meanwhile, Idama a very considerate one says that they should stop them and give them what they want, because if they should go, things will spoil. He explains that they can't cook, take care of children and breast feed the suckling once or even fetch water, but Okoro says there is no big deal about that, that they should be allowed to go. While the women were away on protest, the men are the once doing everything at home. They fetch water, cook, take care of the children and the home too. One of these occasions, Okoro is backing is baby and the baby is crying for food, but Okoro scolds him that he should keep quiet

and eat the food that he is giving him, that the people with a big and full breast has left the town. Also, that same day, Okoro and Idama want to roast a meat on the fire but could not make the fire, rather tears flow from their eyes while trying trying to kindle the fire, but smoke is what they get.

The women march through ughievwen clan towns and ended up in Eyara, a rival town in the creation of Udje satiric songs. In the protest, the learnt the importance of the role of women in the society and agreed to share the compensation equally with the women, and in addition, pay compensation to them. The obnoxious law of not raring goats was also repealed.

In Wole Soyinka's *Lion the Jewel*, the issue or theme of gender and sexuality is presented in the play. Women are seen as property, in the traditional society, they are seen as property that could be bought and sold. Lakunle who is the play, also portrays this act by down grading Sidi, seeing as a brainless human, low level and dumb, wanting to marry her after she has lost her virginity to Baroka who deceived her. He wants to marry her like that since no dowry was required in such a situation. The female characters Sidi and Sadiku, are seen as nothing but an object. They are being manipulated, deceived and tricked. Sidi does not want to marry either Lakunle or Baroka, but Baroka tricks her, rapes her, then gets marry to her. She is an object and nothing more. Sadiku is also tricked, and sees her elation over Baroka's impotence and the power of women vanish as his plot is made

clear. Women may seem like they have power in the mid-20th century Nigeria, but they ultimately do not.

The women are used as an object for pleasure and for sex and nothing more. They are seen as a machine for only giving birth. The women in the traditional society are changed like clothes, a man can have up to five wives, save he has the money to take care of them. A typical example is Baroka, the polygamous traditional society gives importance to Baroka the Bale, it allows him to marry as many girls as he wants. He just uses them for his pleasure and after the arrival of the new favorite, he sends the last favorite to an outhouse. In our society, we represent this as society that never gives respect to a woman as Lakunle says “they are used to pounds the yam or bends all the day to plant the millet... to fetch and carry, to cook and scrub to bring forth the children by the gross” (pg7,9).

