

**DEPARTMENT; ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES.**

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**THE REPRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN  
ANY TWO COMIC WORKS**

The rationale behind the rebellion in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and J.P. Clark's *Wives Revolt's* is as a result of the women in both plays always being relegated to the background and often times being regarded as second class citizens in a male dominated world. They make attempts to untangle the web of life long imprisonment and also to assert themselves as people capable of aspiring to social positions and making their life decisions. Both play addresses key gender issues such as bride wealth, institutionalised male monopoly of leadership in political sphere and the need to do away with the age long tradition, the respect given to women married or unmarried, their domestic roles which is defined and closely monitored by the men.

It is pertinent to note that gender differences, in regards to social construction, are driven by patriarchal ideologies, which gives men an edge over the women. Typically, the male sex are often given a higher status of power the influences of these allotted gender roles on behaviours E.g. the woman is expected to submit to stern laws and mores such as being transferred as property at the death of her husband to any relative who shows interest her, this theme is evident in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* when Mama Rashida is being given in marriage to Mr brown by default. In the part of the male sex, they thrives on aggression and dominance and the society's double-standard on sexual or sex related issues. Historically, men are encouraged to have sex outside wedlock but this frowned at if woman should attempt same. Even though there seem to be a balance today concerning sex outside wedlock where a lady can also indulge in sexual practices, it is still restricted to love and engagement.

In J.P. Clark's *The wives Revolt*, set in the village of Erhuwaren the crisis that occurred stem from the unequal share of the oil largesse given to the people by the company drilling oil from the community. The men divided the money into three parts consisting of the elders, men of a particular age group and finally, to the women, the women revolted against their husbands and the men in the community in the guise of equality abandoning filial and communal responsibility and went on a solidarity movement against male domination refusing to be ensconced in the maelstrom of patriarchy.

With no women to do house chores, the men began doing domestic works which was seen as the 'women's special reserves'. The men on realising that they have made do their threats begged them to return to their homes which they did after much ado.

The resolution of conflict came in favour of the women, the resolution shows the equality between the both sex, the author also tries to confront the issue such as the self-conceited ideology of an as the first class citizen of the world, men's greed and arrogance.

Furthermore, in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*, the play is a social satire which laughs at the political excesses of Nigerian politicians, women's role in a male dominated world, polygamy and its consequences. The main character Major Rahman Taslim Lejoka-Brown, a typical African chauvinistic man, whose opinion of women is individuals that are only to be seen but not heard. A retired army officer who abandons his booming cocoa business to join partisan politics, not because he want to serve the masses, rather, to be able to accumulate wealth and become influential. In a bid to gain support and win more votes, especially from the women, Lejoka-Brown decided to get marry to Madam Bambina Uchenna Ajanaku's daughter Sikira, owing to the fact that she is the President of the market women union.

Liza, a qualified medical doctor from United States, married to Lejoka-Brown in Congo, is no doubt the architect of the family conflict in the play. After her studies in the USA, she returns to

Nigeria after the election to discover that she is not Lejoka-Brown's only wife. Not wanting to share her man with another woman, Liza begins giving Sikira ideas about women liberation, she finally succeeded in having her man to herself when Sikira joins politics and Mama Rashida the first and senior wife of Lejoka-Brown whom he inherited from his late elder brother leaves Lagos to seek greener pastures in the villages. On the other hand Lejoka-Brown is thrown out of the National Liberation Party due to his rigidity and high-handedness. Reversal of role can be seen when Sikira became her party flag bearer and Lejoka-Brown is booted out of office.

According to Simone de Beauvoir, 'it is for man to establish the reign of liberty in the midst of the world. That by and through their natural differentiation, men and women can equivocally affirm their brotherhood. ' in the quest for a primordial balance, harmonious existence and social development, each sex should complement the other and the women should not see the revolution as a change of baton or reversal of roles, power sharing, compromise, negotiation and inclusiveness should be indulged. The existing patriarchal order must be set ablaze giving room for a new rules that is favourable to both sex to phoenix its way through.