

Stemming the Weaponry of Poverty and Patriarchy, and Dis-affirming Feminist Standpoints in Select Literary Texts

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ABSTRACT

The weaponization of poverty and patriarchal over-lord-ship have combined to constitute factors of domination and marginalization of the female gender. Even the United Nations Organization Sustainable Development Goals, SDGS 1, 8 and 10, have identified these two issues as endemic factors of oppression against the girl-child and women. In addition, culture and social construct significantly uphold subjugation over women and affirming male supremacy. On the other hand, feminist critics and activists are constantly canvassing a shift from these patronizing perspectives. Literary texts such as Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*, (2006), Chika Unigwe's *On the Black Sister's Street*, (2010), and Abdulrazak Gurna's *Gravel Heart* (2017), document poverty in financial standing; increasing inequalities, lack of decent work and material resources among women as factors predisposing them to intimidating transactional male-female sexual relationships, identifying incidences from different parts of Africa. cursory reading of these texts portray varied forms of female abuse, whereas critical studies on the texts reveal gender violence, female objectification, patriarchal domination, bad leadership, This paper makes a qualitative analysis of the effect of poverty and intimidation on the selected female characters, using a social theoretical framework of Feminist Standpoint which is examined as a feminist epistemology that describes the master-slave dialectic of the genders. Specifically, the paper dismantles certain feminist agitations that throw up women as the vulnerable gender, and argues for the eradication of poverty and provision of decent work and economic growth to guarantee stronger self-affirmation on the side of the women.

1. Introduction

Poverty and patriarchy are endemic and have become factors of oppression and suppression against women and girls. The concept of poverty is varied and multidimensional in shade as much as its degree and level of manifestation. It may present as deprivation of basic amenities, in form of finance, food, housing; or exclusion in social arena or vulnerability and victimhood. Deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability are widespread and so felt even on global societal level so much leading to the United

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Nations Organisation designing the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs some of which core planks were 1) to end poverty in all its forms everywhere; 8) create decent work opportunities and economic growth, and 10) reduced inequalities. The factors that engender and sustain poverty impact the lowly placed and vulnerable and the importance of item No 10 of the SDGs on the need to reduce inequalities which stipulates that inequalities based on income, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, religion and opportunity continue to persist across the world. Inequality remains one of the important areas of concern that the world needs to tackle, stressing that the “gender gap in power and leadership remains entrenched, the current rate indicating that the next generation of women will still spend an average 2.3 more hours per day on unpaid care and domestic work than men” (UN Women, Gender Snapshot 2023). And so there are a lot to be done by collaborating nations in reducing poverty and inequalities.

1.1 The Purpose/Objective

The purpose of the study is to dismantle feminist agitations that throw up women as the vulnerable gender and to argue a shift from these patronizing perspectives by interrogating incidents in the literary texts by Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*, (2006), Chika Unigwe's *On the Black Sister's Street*, (2010), and Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Gravel Heart* (2017). It aims to make a qualitative analysis of the effect of poverty and intimidation on the selected female characters, in the texts using a social theoretical framework of Feminist Standpoint. In addition, it examine the countries' level of attainment of the SDGs, especially as it relates to goals nos. 1, 8, and 10. It specifically argues for the eradication of poverty and gender gap, to guarantee stronger self-affirmation and independence the women.

1.1.1 Methodology

The study uses a qualitative method of literary analysis of the texts: Kain Agary's *Yellow Yellow* (2006), Chika Unigwe's *On the Black Sister's Street* (2010), and Abulrazak Gurnah's *Gravel Heart* (2017) as the primary data; literature reviews, journal articles, and policy documents from the United Nations form the secondary data.

2. Theoretical Framework

In understanding the concept of poverty, various definitions as there are authors will suffice. Morduch, is of the view that:

The earliest definitions of poverty centered on the inability to obtain adequate food and other basic necessities. Today, the main focus continues to be on material deprivations, the failure to command private resources. Development experts including (Sen, 1987) though have argued that this notion of economic welfare remains too narrow to reflect individual well-being, spurring active efforts over the past several decades to expand the concept of poverty (27).

Poverty entails lack of basic amenities necessary for a good living in its minute sense focusing on lack of money, low income and indecent work. Inadequate income is problematic to the life of an individual and tends to be of an immediate concern. It is for this that Morduch adds that, “low income tends to correlate strongly with other concerns that are important but harder to measure. Those in the worst health and with the lowest social status, for example, tend also to come from the bottom of the income distribution. Lack of money serves as a rough but quantifiable proxy for a host of deprivations. Asides money and financial deprivation, poverty presents on even a larger scale, becoming a weapon of oppression against the people. As (Eketé, 2020) submits that, “poverty is now a weapon especially within Africa. A minute powerful few have weaponized poverty for the attainment of their individual and collective objectives. This explains why the numerous efforts of the international communities and series of poverty alleviation programmes have not yielded anything celebratory” (29). The bottom class of the income distribution are captured in the texts under study as manifest amongst the female characters.

It is baffling why even the efforts of United Nations and international communities are not actually providing any positive effect on stemming poverty. The magnitude of exclusion and vulnerability seem to escalate instead of waning and the situation does not portend a better or positive outlook for the future. Poverty has on the other hand assumed a much more disturbing dimension. Exemplifying its effect in Africa, Eketé echoed the experience of P. O. Lumumba, who held 250 town hall meetings during an election campaign as against his opponent who appeared only to distribute money to the people a day to the election and still won the position and so concluded, "Africans are not moved by ideas, their stomach leads". This is the exemplary situation of how politicians subject the people perpetually to poverty by handouts instead of allowing them use their voting power. This situation is confirmed in a case study of Zimbabwe: "Investigating Weaponization of Poverty by Political Organizations", which explains the poverty situation. Poverty in African countries continue to increase because according to Wellington Garikai Bonga, "Politicians who hold public offices and in a position to solve poverty issues through policy derivation and support its implementation continue to preach the gospel of prosperity, of which the prosperity seems not materializing" (2). Successive governments have not deployed commitment and transparency in implementing policies and so poverty situation are on the increase leaving the citizenry hungry and dependent on insensitive policies. Lack of political will to implement positive policies continue to be the bane of attainment of the SDGS 1, 8, and 10, come 2030.

As poverty has become weaponized so also is patriarchy, having both as negative tools of subjugation and oppression. Patriarchy comes in forms and degrees such as subjugation, subservience, silence and voicelessness, financial control, shaming and women's sexual choices. Sylvia Walby purposes that patriarchy comes in different forms and are conceptualized at levels of abstractions as systems of social relations, capitalism, racism, as mode of production, relations in paid work, male violence, sexuality and patriarchal relation in cultural institutions. Walby opines that there is a shift from private to public patriarchy whereby in "private patriarchy the principal patriarchal strategy is exclusionary, in the public, it is segregational and subordinating" (24). Public patriarchy found at the level of economic empowerment therefore becomes a collective and unending issue against women.

(Machandani, 1993) quoting Sylvia Walby in *Theorizing Patriarchy* defines patriarchy as "a system of social structure and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. This definition makes patriarchy viewed as structural phenomenon rather than one perpetuated by the individual exploitative man." (135). It presents on the surface as cultural practice of male domination over the females. Mirchandani further echoes Walby's outline of what she calls "the six structures of patriarchy: paid work, housework, culture, sexuality, violence and the state, stating that each of them impact on the other, though, they are autonomous but have different degrees of intensity" (135). Just like poverty in its levels of manifestation, Patriarchy has equally shifted to a public level to become a social phenomenon, no longer like an individual, family or communal affair. Suad Joseph outlines varied forms of patriarchy such as domestic, social, economic and political patriarchy, and states that, "Patriarchal kingship is the primary source of economic security, and males and elders are considered to be financially responsible for women and junior relations" (15). This follows that the financial contributions of women and girls do not make much significance and are not counted in national statistics. However, the present century has seen a shift away from private to public patriarchy which is much more a collective problem.

In most cases too, people weaponize poverty against themselves, especially governments of countries that are insensitive to the plight of the people, and have failed to effectively implement the requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals. In affirmation to this standpoint, Jalingo Agba observes that "for most important persons in our lives and families, the comfortable time for them to give money or assistance is when they want to entertain them or when they are grieving". He argues that successive governments have not deployed political will in alleviating poverty but rather prefers to handout tokens to the people. Therefore patriarchy as weapons are public and universal especially affecting the womenfolk as a group in their environment in which they are active participants. And according to (Gilligan, 2008) "women in the terms of their gender ideology did not exist as persons with a mind and sexuality of their own" (26). This idea reveals the cultural standpoint where the female gender is subjugated under the control of the dominant group. However, this paradigm shift to public patriarchy

does not make women passive or victims, rather they are involved in making their own choices. The argument about women acting actively in a relationship and making choices raises the question on the feminist stand point which interrogates the truth of the feminist claim that women are being oppressed. (Hekman, 1997) again raises a central and unavoidable question for feminist theory, interrogating the truth of the feminist claim that women have been and are oppressed (342). This question is to be justified as they shape the future of feminist epistemology.

Feminist standpoint theory is a social constructive argument representing a new narrative in the feminist and gender studies, what Coraine Code (1991) called a "new mapping of the epistemic domain" to which feminist theory owes much to" (Hekman 342). It is a contemporary feminist theory that seeks to destabilize mainstream feminist thinking, and described by Helen E. Longino as "one of the theory of knowledge that reflects the view that women (or feminists) occupy a social location that affords them/us a privileged access to social phenomena" (201). This theory creates opportunity for a multiple standpoint and perspectives in knowledge. In her conceptualization of the feminist standpoint in Hartsock's text, *Money, Sex and Power* Susan Hekman states that the feminist standpoint "expresses female at a particular time and place located within a particular set of social relations... Feminist standpoint... goes beneath the surface of appearances to reveal the real but concealed social relations" (344). Feminist standpoint puts out the need to understand women in their past and the domination and subjugation by the patriarchal society. It highlights the other side of the narrative affirming the value, and contributions of the women in their environment. This episteme disregards the inequalities between the gender in knowledge production and tasks on a new perspective. That is thus according to Lina Gurung, achieved as a collective struggle by women or the marginalized who push out a distinct way of knowledge different from the men.

Standpoint theory therefore is a type of critical social theory that empowers the oppressed by helping to understand, explain and improve their situation from the vantage perspective of the women. (Gurung, 2020), argues that:

Within the standpoint theory the dominant groups will be limited in their epistemic perspectives to their own values and perspectives, unable to gain a wider view of interests and experiences, but that marginalized groups can attain a more global perspectives that not only begin in their own experiences but also includes consideration of the dominant ideologies to which they are subjugated. (109).

The interaction between the marginalized and the dominant and dominating group, engendering poverty that has assumed global scale and effect, perhaps informed the promulgation of the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations. The texts under study *Yellow-Yellow*, *On Black Sister Street*, and *Gravel Heart* present the marginalized in their downsides of issues and social interaction within the two worlds of oppression and the superiority and other realities from the dominant group perspective.

In a recent study Laura Haruna-Banke and Iorwuese Gogo see Chika Unigwe's *On the Black Sisters Street* as a realist text. In a paper titled "A Realist Interpretation of Chika Unigwe *On Black Sister's Street*" the writers probe the ugly life of exploitation and oppression of the four young girls who were taken advantage of by an older man as a result of poverty, unemployment, poor social care among other factors. Using a social realism approach the study argues that "well placed individuals, parents, and society, organisations and the government should make efforts to improve and secure the lives of vulnerable young women in Africa in order to help them escape from their vulnerabilities" (32). The paper identifies the problem of inequality and the attendant exploitation of the female folk asking that it be contained. Uchechukwu Umezurike in "Sexuality and Subjectivity in Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sister's Street*" examines the socio-cultural practices such as sexual objectification and prostitution that inhibit female subjectivity using the framework of Althusser's theory of Interpellation. The paper exposes the negative scenario that presents women as participants in ideological practice of sexual slavery. Also Barakat Sanni in "A Psychoanalytic Review of Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sister's Street*" gives attention to the contemporary, social and popular concerns that affect the females within their existential frame by examining the psychological dimensions and state of mind, conscious and unconscious, of the experiences of certain characters in terms of how they respond to trauma,

trafficking, corruption and other postcolonial realities" (3). The paper routes for a better living condition to carter for the welfare of the poor.

Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*, has been studied by Kayode Omoniyi Ogunfolabi in "Biracialism and Trauma in Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*". The study ruptures the narrative that names biracial women as the "other" signifying discrimination against the womenfolk. Hani Hani makes a postcolonial analysis of issues of multiple exploitation and silencing of the natives in 'The Subaltern can Speak; Interrogating Narratives of Exploitation in Kaine Agary's *Yellow Yellow*', and argues that after all "the subaltern can speak irrespective of how they speak and when they speak" (234). The paper asserts that both the woman and the environment are victims of multiple shades of exploitation and patriarchal structures.

The studies already done by various authors on Gurnah's *Gravel Heart* include that by, Abdulkadir Unal, "Plunderers of the Human Spirit: A Criticism of Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Gravel Heart* in Terms of Literary Trauma Theory". using Carth's trauma theory the paper argues that trauma threatens the physical and or psychological well-being of the individual which is understood through repetitive flashbacks. But it believes that "belatedness and incomprehensibility are at the heart of repetitive seeing of a traumatic event" (863). Experiences of trauma therefore is replete in the texts narratives. Also in "Unhomeliness, Self-estrangement, and Labefaction in Abdulrazak's Gurnah's *Gravel Heart*", Mehmet Recap Tas aligns *Gravel Heart* to Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* laying emphasis on the lines "unfit to live or die. O, gravel heart" (242). The study argues that Africa is still under the influence of heavy colonization manifest in the forms of estrangement and or unhomeliness or the state of in-betweenness or displacement.

However issues in these texts have not yet been dealt with exhaustively. There is a vacuum which this paper sets out to fill. It aims at exposing the effects of poverty, lack of financial power or basic amenities as thrust to male dominance and intimidation of the female folk. Using the framework of Feminist Standpoint, the issues of feminist portrayal of victimhood for the female is set to be disrupted and debunked. This paper therefore makes a qualitative analysis of existential issues and circumstances of the protagonists and major female characters in the texts such as Zilayefa in *Yellow Yellow*, Ama, Sisi and Efe and Joyce in *On Black Sister's Street*; and Saida in *Gravel Heart*. It argues that the female gender has a choice to an alternative action by maintaining their perspectives and not playing to victim. At the end, it sues for effective implementation of policies to eradicate poverty and inequality as enshrined in the SDG's 1, 8, and 10 aimed at empowering women, creating jobs and reducing inequalities in the economic and educational opportunities for all gender, but especially the female gender.

3. Existential Issues Against the Female Gender

Poverty and patriarchy are identified as the core of gender oppression tools. Poverty comes in different shapes which may be; lack of financial empowerment, lack of basic amenities of life including food, housing, clothing, job opportunities. Thus, according to Eketé "poverty is a convoluted problem which the World Bank defined as "living on less than \$1.90 a day, or about \$700 per year, which puts one tenth of the world's population below the global poverty line". These inadequacies affect the female gender who seem to always be at the receiving end, for being vulnerable. The female vulnerability as a construct of social and cultural relationship puts them out as victims and less dominant groups. This situation comes out obviously in relationships where the women are subjugated to do the bidding of the male who usually take the domineering position and deploying their power arsenals such as money, or material gifts against the female. And as has been noted, "sometimes for the women it was impossible to say no, because of the insistence of the men or because of the threat to their loved ones or the needs of the family, and because they understood their obligations" (*Gravel Heart*, 203). These scenarios are seen in the circumstances surrounding the lives of the selected characters in the texts.

The texts under study document poverty on the African continent, showing circumstances of living and the consequent effect of exploitation on the less privileged, especially the females who live below the stipulated "United Nations Development Program Human Development Index[HDI] such as life expectancy at birth, average school attendance period, and per capita income" (Eketé, 2020}. The

prevailing lack of amenities represented in the texts affirm the level of poverty in Africa which unfortunately is not abating or improving even as the timeframe for the SDG's attainment of the goals are fast approaching. The Gender Snapchat 2023 Annual Installment Series Report by UN Women and UN DESA on Gender Equality Across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2023 indicates that the gender gap is not abating. Thus halfway to the endpoint of the 2030 agenda for the SDG, the world is failing to achieve gender equality making an increasingly distant goals as more than 340 million women and girls will still live in extreme poverty by 2030 and close to one in four will experience moderate or severe food insecurity" (UN Women).

The texts have also discussed the issue of poverty and inequality. In *Yellow Yellow* the protagonist Zilayefa, a young poor girl living a poor life with her mother Bibi in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria suffer much of environmental degradation arising from oil exploration and the concomitant oil spillage that happens from time to time, and accentuated by lack of amenities and care by the multinational companies and the government who benefit from the oil drilling, to the detriment of the masses. Against this backdrop, Zilayefa having a Greek father who abandoned her mother, Bibi reminisces through the circumstances of her birth and the ordeal of her mother as a single parent. "She is stranded, constrained to take care of a child she has made with a man who sail away into the horizon. (Akung and Iloeje, 2020). This background of abandonment sets the pace for their suffering. The people and communities in Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* are therefore depicted as living in abject poverty brought upon it by oil spillage and without compensation either from the oil companies or the government. The picture of a frustrated people is captured in the text, "the community took the matter up with the oil company that owned the pipes, but they said they suspected sabotage by the youths and were not going to pay compensation for all the destruction that the burst pipes had caused" (Agary, 2006). Such is the ineptitude and insensitivity of government who impoverish the people by very bad policy implementations.

This scenario strongly summarizes the general state of affairs in the vast areas of the Niger Delta. The community members especially the female folks are driven into poverty and further oppressed by powers that be, using the weapon of intimidation that keeps them in perpetual penury. This affirms the claim of the feminists that "the ruling class vision is "partial and perverse", while the oppressed exposes the real relation and among humans" (Hartsocks). The idea of the neglect of the community oil devastated environment and the negative attitude of the oil companies and the government to the question of paying compensation for the damaged farm lands pose the major problem to understanding the real import of the damage on the people.

Abandoned to their plight, poverty affects Zilayefa's desire of education, but which by chance, she was able to write her qualifying examination through the help of Sisi a generous woman who accepted her into her household and found her a job to help her prepare for her future. Also, her relationship with Admiral predisposes her to achieving that dream. However, all come crashing as she falls out with Admiral when she announced her pregnancy to him. Zilayefa goes overboard to affirm her standpoint of wanting to continue with her schooling in spite of the baby. She does not allow her baby to halt her dream. But she declares that, "I still intended to go to school. I had to do this for myself and for my mother. A child with no father was a sure way to throw my education out the window, because all the goodwill I had received from Sisi and Lolo was sure to be packed up with my suitcase, my baby, and me and sent expressly back to the village" (174). But refused going to fight for the paternity of her child, as would be agitated for by feminism. Zilayefa is wiser, she does not want to be like her mother nor to replicate the stigma of a single mother, and bring up a fatherless child like herself. She aborts the baby she is carrying for Admiral to disrupt the trend of devastation arising from fatherlessness.

In Chika Unigwe's *on the Black Sisters Street*, the circumstances surrounding the four young girls who by chance find themselves as sisters in faraway Europe are foregrounded on poverty and patriarchal domination. Each of the girls Sisi, Emeh, Ama and Joyce, has challenges of lack, inadequate income, and other poverty related challenges that pushed them to their decisions. The severe lack under which weight they are writhing enabled the impetus for their exploitation by men and their seeking a better future outside the shores of their immediate location. And so, (Longdet and Ezekulie, 2022) posit that, "Sisi, Efe, Joyce and Ama are young African women with robust dreams. In a bid to metamorphose these dreams and shove them into reality they willfully accept an offer from a male pimp Dele who

becomes a benefactor promising them the benefits of ferrying them from Africa to Europe, the land of their colonizers, has the capacity to turn their dreams into reality. All that the land demands in exchange is the merchandising of their bodies” (121). The harsh circumstances being faced by the girls put them out for exploitation. The weaponization of the state of poverty against the girls is reflected in the interactions with Dele, a man who is best described as a human trafficking agent. He has become a common denominator in the circumstances that take the girls to the life of prostitution outside the shores of Nigeria, to Italy. At the death of Sisi, the girls relaying their fears tell of the circumstances of their coming to Brussels, and the role Dele played. They agreed that “Dele is the common denominator in their lives” (Unigwe, 2010). Dele a trafficker bullies the girls into accepting to travel and also follows them strictly, monitoring their activities over there with very strict conditions. He holds their economic freedom and liberation. Ama, recalls of her first meeting with Dele at her aunty’s shop, “today, I just wan talk to you; he said, dragging her down to sit beside him on a wooden chair”. She further recalls him as saying: “if you wan make easy money, if you wan go abroad, come to my office on Randle make we talk. But only if you dey serious o. If you no dey serious make you no waste my time and yours” (162-3). It was therefore clear that he actually talked Ama into desiring to travel and when she decides to do so, he exploits her sexually before helping her telling her bluntly: “I shall sample you before you go ... I like you. If to say I be Muslim I for marry you. Make you second wife.... But I must sample you. I must. I swear!” (168). This is the example of effrontery of someone taking advantage of a woman’s hopeless situation to cajole her into sexual submission. And she gave in so she can get through. Ama is propelled by the desire of making money and joining the league of ‘big girls’ in Lagos. Writing about Dele and his exploits, (Igwe and Ezeonu, 2023), said of him, “Dele uses sex as weapon for job offer. He exploits the girls who service his sexuality even inside his office in order to get his attention and job offer” (72). Thus, he employs patriarchal domination and weaponry of sex as condition for being of assistance to the girls.

Likewise Sisi’s parents suffer a job loss in the civil service, she recalls how she eats garri all day, with a broken toilet cistern parked up without water to flush and a whole lot of rot and decay in the political and social system she is in. She has no choice than to run back to Dele who had offered her help to take her abroad. He bullies her sexually and rolls out the financial implications of sending her abroad amounting to thirty thousand Euros, whereby she remits five hundred Euros or at least one hundred Euros a month without fail. It is observed that the warning “without fail” came out hard like a piece of heavy wood, which rolled across the table and fell with a thud. Any failure would result in unpleasantness” (42). The whole scenario is all about threat and domination. Without giving her a chance to respond he handed her over his card to call him if she pleases. This is all about humiliation, marginalization and abuse. He tells her: “you be fine gal na, abi see your backside, kai who talk say na dat Jennifer Lopez get the finest yansh? Make dem come here come see your assets! As for those melons wey you carry for chest, omo, how you no go fin’ work?” (42-43). Sisi feels provoked by his words but is restrained from acting it out because of the need and helplessness simmering around her.

A similar situation of helplessness and humiliation is suffered by Saida, the female figure in Abdulrazak’s *Gravel Heart*. Saida, Salim’s mother and Amir’s sister makes added effort to protect her brother who had fallen into trouble to the detriment of her marriage. Saida consciously opts to sleep with Hakim, the power-drunk arrogant son of the prime minister who arranged to put Amir in prison for allegedly raping his younger sister. Hakim insists that Amir be put into custody, rejects all entreaties from Saida and bullies her into submitting to his terms. He reminds her that only she can save her brother and in a sexist language tells her:

I mean for you to be clear what I am saying, plainly understand that I want you. I want to remove that mtandio veil and undress you and take full command of your body. I want you to yield your body to me. I want to take charge of it and do with it as I wish. I thirst with desire for you...I want to make love to you, not just once, but to my satisfaction...In return, I will release your brother. (240).

Using his powers of patriarchy, Hakim has weaponized Saida's helplessness to want to sleep with her as a condition to release her brother. Saida makes her choice and accedes to this demand for the sake of his brother's release, even against the counsel of her husband not to accept that condition. Her action goes a long way to projecting the paradigm shift in women standing up for themselves in decision taking. Her husband is strongly behind her but she goes ahead to make her choice. The same can be said of the other female characters in the texts under reference. They have their ego bruised and humiliated by people taking advantage of their situation, and so the decision they took was entirely theirs.

4. Conclusion

It is revealed that in African countries the dominant superior group weaponize poverty in order to dominate the poor by creating the master-slave dialectics. But the question arises: why do the women choose the alternative in the face of daunting challenge? It is important to note that the female folks in these texts who are victims of the oppression of forms of lack have choices not to tow the path ordinarily expected of them by others. They, on their own decide to change the trajectory of narrative and action by insisting on their standpoint shown in their deliberate choices. Their individual decisions and actions counter the feminist philosophy which tries to remove the women from making choices impervious to persuasion from others. By standing firmly on their decisions, the women have reinforced their epistemic standpoint and authority to express their perspective. According to 2023 Gender snapshot report, achieving zero poverty for all women and girls by 2030 will require simultaneously acting on long-standing gender disparities, including having access to land, health care and family planning, education and the labour market. Gender-responsive social protection is essential, as is combating gender-based discrimination that limits women's self affirmation.

5. Recommendation

In order to stem the weaponization of poverty and the patriarchal domination come 2030, African countries and their governments are urged to work towards implementation of the charter on SDGS, especially, nos 1,8 and 10 by:

- Working to reduce poverty, provide decent and equal work opportunities and create economic growth,
- Invest in skill and vocational education that is inclusive and equitable.
- Strengthen institutional capacities, in collaboration with private sectors to create jobs and drive capacity building for all in order to dismantle the great walls of master-slave relationship that may work against the female gender.
- Achieve progress on eradicating poverty 26 times faster to reach the goal by 2030.
- Achieving zero poverty and gender disparity for all women and girls by 2030 including allowing women access to land, ownership of properties and entrepreneurship with education as against wage earning.
- Provide gender-responsive social protection in combating gender-based discrimination that limits women's leadership confidence.

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