

THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF RADICAL FEMINISM ON FAMILY VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY IGBO SOCIETY

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Abstract

This paper tends to examine critically the impact of feminism on family values in Igbo contemporary society. Values are moral principles and norms that direct the life of people in a society. Igbo society has a value system which involves respect for human dignity, love, high moral standard respect for elders, high sense of responsibility, which are nurtured and upheld basically at the family levels. But negative understanding and approaches to feminism among many contemporary Igbo feminine folk have adverse effects on these values. This understanding is enlivened by women's greater access to education and career success, financial independence, equitable pay with men; right to take part in decision making, right to own property etc. The Feminist has gone beyond empowerment to subtle dismantling of the traditional family values, loosening for instance, the natural bonds between parents and children; eroding the natural femininity of women, leaving them as brutalized, frustrated and self-masculinized. This paper employs the method of critical analysis, and argues that if Igbo society should adopt Radical feminist's principles, it will lead to total emasculation, high rate of infidelity, divorce and total destruction of family values. But what exactly are these Radical feminists advocating for? Superiority or empowerment? How responsible would Igbo society be with misdirected mothers? Questions as the above are the motivations for this paper. This paper concludes that negative values such as dishonesty, prostitution, infidelity, drug abuse, kidnapping, rape and other moral maladies witnessed in the present Igbo society are partly informed by women's negligence and failure to attend adequately to their roles as mothers in the family mostly as a result of their feministic orientations and practices.

Keywords: Feminism, Radical feminism, Separatism, Family values, Equality, Igbo society.

Introduction

Igbo people are an ethnic group living in the South- eastern Nigeria. A lot of things have been written on the group of people called the Igbo. Kanu, (2022:82) has it that the Igbo people are a single people even though fragmented and scattered, inhabiting a geographical area of stretching from Benin to Igala and Cross River to Niger Delta. He avers that Igbo people speak the same language which gradually developed various dialects but understood among all the groups. Kanu further maintains that their cultural patterns are closely related, based on similar cults and social institutions; they believe in a common Supreme Being known as Chukwu or Chineke. However, there are two theories on the origin of Igbo people. The first theory which is the 'Northern Centre Theory' holds that the Igbo migrated from five Northern centre areas; and these areas were the Semetic Centre of the Near and Far East, the Hermatic Centre around Egypt and Northern Africa, the Western Sahara, the Chaddian Centre and the Nok Centre. The Second theory holds that the early migrations of the proto-Igbo originated from the areas termed as the Igbo heartland such as; Owerri, Okigwe, Orlu and Awka divisions.

Anyika (2021: 114), writing on the origin of Igbo gave different interpretations by different scholars on the origin of Igbo. First, he says that eighteenth Century texts wrote the "Igbo" word as "Heebo" or "Eboe", which was therefore thought by Olaudeh Equiano and others to be a corruption of "Hebrew". Some scholars like Meek according to Anyika speculate that the root- gboo is of Sudanic origin, while writers like Shelton traced the origin of Igbo to the Igala, among whom "Onigbo" is the word for slave, "Oni" meaning people. Anyika further observes that some scholars placed Igbo as derived from the verb "gboo" and therefore has connotations of "to protect", "to shelter", or "to prevent"- hence the notion of a protected people or a community of peace.

Furthermore, Anyika citing Acholonu maintains that the Igbo story is not the story of a localized community but one of the black people all over the continent of Africa. Igbo people are said to mean “the Ancients, the first people, the Aborigines”. They originated from the Grimalda/ Bushmen, who were direct descendants of Homo-erectus (Early man). They traversed and migrated out of Africa as hunter gatherers. They were called Igbo by the earliest migrants, properly the Nri who met them in Sittu on arrival in the Niger-Benue confluence area.

The Geographical Territory of Igbo land

Igbo land is located in the South Eastern region of Nigeria. The majority of Igbo people today live in what are the Imo, Enugu, Anambra, Ebonyi, Abia States of Nigeria. They also live in Asaba, Ika, Ukwuani (Kwale) and Agbor areas of Delta, Ahoada area of Rivers, Cross River, Akwa- Ibom States of Nigeria. The Igbo people live within the vast geographical expanse known as South-Eastern Nigeria which extends from 4°15' to 7° 5' N and 5° 32' to 9°E. Agueno (2005:48) avers that the geographical expanse of Igbo land resembles a rhombus with sides of approximately 280 kilometers and covers an area of 76,355 square kilometers. He stresses that lying north of the Delta Swamplands, the portion of Igbo area east of the Niger River and West of the Cross River is a low Tableland. In the South, it is cut into three unequal parts by the Imo and Qua-Ibo Rivers. In the North, it rises gently to Awgu- Udi- Nsukka hills which run in a South- North direction. In the Northwest, it is bounded by the Anambra River, the most important tributary of the lower Niger, and in the East and Southeast by the Cross River, whose general basin covers the Nigeria- Cameroon border.

The Igbo ethnic group is divided into clans; each is made up of towns and each town is comprised of villages. The village is primary social unit constituted of families or Kindred.

Societal and Family Values in Traditional Igbo Society

In defining a society, Arua (2006:82) explains that a society is the grouping of human beings living together by common rules of conduct for the purpose and mutual realization of common goal or end. By rules of conduct, he stresses that it means not just enforceable laws but behaviours which, by their predictability or regularity have been able to be understood and shared. So, understanding and living by these rules that govern interpersonal relations is the essence (character) of social order. In the words of Ezechi (2023:4), man is born in the society, raised up in the society and the society shapes his life as he makes import to the values and ideals of the society, either directly or indirectly. In every society, certain ways of doing things are seen as accepted to the societal members. Each society has laid down rules, laws and regulations and culture that control the behavior. So, societal values are set of beliefs and principles which the society has experimented and approved for the maintenance of society.

Family values on the other hand are those traditional or cultural values that pertain to the family's structure, roles and attitudes. These values are; respect for others, kindness towards others, responsibility, honesty, integrity, hard work, loyalty etc. so, Family from the Latin word “familia” as the smallest unit in the society serves to give a name and belonging to life. The role of family in the Igbo society cannot be over emphasized. Everyone belongs to a family. Family here comprises of both nuclear and extended family, which is made up of the father (nna), the mother (nne), the children (umuaka) and every other persons that has blood relations with the family. Isidienu (2015:120) clarifies this definition above, stating that family in Igbo context differs from the English concept of family in the sense that it does not apply only to a husband, his wife and children but also involves somewhat vaguely other relations such as in-laws, uncles, cousins, nephews distant or near or even maids and servants. The above assertion is quite true because in Igbo society each family sees itself as close relatives and share their joys and sorrows with each other. So, family emanates from marriage, an institution which has continued to have great impact on man's life. Man cannot do without marriage due to the role it plays in building up a family. Children are born to the family. The first question asked of a man is children that is why the Igbo people give the names like

“Nwamaka”, “Nwadinmka”, “Nwabugwu” meaning – child is very good and important. So, in marriage, once a child is born, the training starts immediately. Isidienu stresses that the training of an individual in Igbo setup is total. It covers all aspects of life (mental, political, social, economical and moral). An individual after going through the family norms and upbringing is well balanced in all aspects of life. It is the duty of the father and the mother to inculcate these values into their children. The father ensures the protection and security of the family. He ensures that there are orderliness, peace, harmony and love in the family. He provides the necessary things needed in his family. In the Igbo traditional society, the father is seen as the head of the family (idejiuno). That is why, when a father becomes the first to die or dies early, the security and protection the family enjoys will no longer be there. The children will have more freedom, this occurs when the mother is so liberal. No wonder it is said in Igbo “nkita nwaanyi zuru na-eri akwa” this Igbo proverb means that women naturally are soft and can pamper their children unlike some men who use iron hand and harsh voices to their children.

There are roles for mother (nne) and children in the family. Women’s roles involve cooking, doing domestic works and keeping the home clean. Their other roles are to ensure that the children eat well and importantly to teach these children morals, values and respect. In fact, it is the duty of the both parents to inculcate family values to their children. While mothers concentrate more on their female children; teaching and advising them the necessary things they need to know and also avoid as young girls, the fathers concentrate more on their male children, instructing and guiding them on things they should do and also avoid in order to become useful and hard working. All these are geared towards preparing them for a future adaptability in the society. When these values are not properly inculcated in these children, the society is bound to suffer the repercussions. That is why in Igbo land, there is this adage, “ofu onye anghi azu nwa”, “nwa bu nwa oha” meaning that training of children is not restricted to father/mother alone. Other family members or other people can help in this training whenever a child is found misbehaving. This is because failure to do so, the entire society will suffer the repercussions. That is why it is said in Igbo land, “ofu aka luta mmanu, ozuo uwa onu”.

No wonder Kanu (2022:84), avers that Igbo people does not see himself or herself as an individual without noticing immediately the need for the other. That is why the proverb “onyeaghana nwanneya” (no one should leave his brother and sister behind) is very important in Igbo traditional society. This kanu further expresses in proverbs as follows:

1. A person is a person because of other people.
 2. Sticks in a bundle cannot be broken.
 3. When spiders unite, they can tie up a lion.
 4. If one finger tries to pick up something from the ground, it cannot.
 5. Behind an able man there are always other able men.
 6. It takes a village to raise a child.
 7. If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to far, go together.
 8. I am because we are, and since we are, therefore, I am.
 9. If a Lizard stays off from the foot of a tree, it would be caught.
 10. A tree does not make a forest.
 11. If two or more people urinate in the same place at the same time, it would produce more foam.
 12. When a bird builds its nest, it uses the feathers of other birds.
 13. One person is not the whole world.
 14. It is by taking a goat around that you are able to sell it.
- The question remains; all these proverbs listed above, are they still practicable now in our contemporary Igbo society? If not, what went wrong? (kedu ebe mmiri siri baa na- opi ugbogulu?)

Women in Traditional Igbo Society (their weaknesses, beautiful and bitter stories)

The Igbo traditional society refers to the pre-colonial time. This is the time when one can truly get to the heart of the Igbo people since there were no coercive infiltration on Igbo culture and tradition. It is also considered as the “Olden days”, “mgbe ezi di n’ukwu ukwa”, mgbe enu bu ani osa” (when traditional customs were pure and incorrupt). The traditional Igbo woman presents to the world that the primary aim of womanhood is motherhood. A woman is a female human. All female human beings are in general addressed as women. The person and destiny of a child is formed in the woman. Women not only do they bear children, they nurse, they cherish, they give warmth, they care for life since all human life passes through their own bodies. They are at the very heart of life transmission while the man pries into it. (Anyika, 2021:46). In the traditional Igbo society, children especially the male child gives the mother a home in the husband’s family. The woman is always blamed for barrenness or even for the failure of children to be responsible in the Igbo society. In the traditional Igbo society, a woman who is not married has no role to play. Anyika notes that marriage is the first step of a distinguishing achievement of a woman in Igbo taught and life. Married life is the beginning of status in Igbo world. It is said that “nwaanyi bu ugwu di ya” (husband is the pride of the woman). If a woman remained unmarried, she had never fully socialized with the community. The beautiful things about women are;

-If husband and wife plan together, one tuber of yam multiplies (di na nwunye gbaa izu,otu ibe ji eju oku).

-A good fraternal living in the family with each role being fulfilled makes things work out well (izu ka mma na nne ji).

- A child does not forget the mother (nwata anaghi echezo nne muru ya).

- The soup prepared by a mother is always sweet (ofe nne siri ana-atoka).

Despite these beautiful stories about women in the traditional Igbo society, there are as well bitter stories about Igbo women.

Traditional Igbo Society as Patriarchy

The term patriarchy means a system of male-domination structured on monogamous and polygamous marriage. Patriarchy is the cause of women’s economic woes as well as their dependence on men.(Egbai 2016:23) buttress that patriarchy is regarded as the source of women’s oppression, marginalization and subjugation. Anyika citing Yakubu (2021:49) sees Igbo society as out rightly patriarchal and thus does not appreciate the dignity of women. She believes that proverbs and myths of the Igbo people are all tools of subjugation of the woman. Women from the outset of antiquity have been phallogocentric. This is because men’s decisions have always prevailed without putting into consideration women’s opinions and perspectives. In Igbo land, some cultures and traditions were made to favour the men alone whereas, women were meant to subordinate. For instance, it is rightful and cultural for a man to marry many wives as he likes. Even to the extent of having concubines and the wife will do nothing about it. But, this act is an abomination if a married woman tries it. She will be accused of infidelity and must appeased the gods, or face the repercussion.

There were huge inequality between men and women in the traditional Igbo society. Women were not given equal right with the men. They do not have access to own property, education and to vote. Employment opportunities were very limited for women and are often given at the expense of loss of social status. Women’s basic duty is to give birth, cook and keep the house. They had no right to participate in decision making. In fact, most women suffered much in the hands of their husband’s brothers when their husbands died. The widows in traditional Igbo society passed through humiliation before their husbands were buried. At some places the woman would be made to take an oath of innocence of the death of the man by drinking the water used in washing the husband’s body. She would be shaved and then sit in mourning for some days without bath. Some women were left in dilapidated buildings because they refused to have sex with their brothers-in-law. Those who could not bear any child would lose the right to live in their husband’s homeland and farm on his farmland after his death. So, in traditional Igbo society, traditional values give men property rights over women. These values regard women as inferior to men.

Feminism Defined

Feminism is the women's movement that advocate for the right of women as it concerns social, political, and economic equality with men. The word feminism originates from the French word *Feminisme* which was coined by Charles Fourier. The term feminism first came into use in English during the 1880s which was used to name the avocation of equal rights for women. In the eighteenth-century Europe, women basically were not given equal rights with men; there was a gross marginalization of women on the account of their sex due to certain prejudices bordering on the inferiority of the female sex to the male sex. Haradhan,(2022:5) defines feminism as the struggle against sexism, where male supremacy and female oppression are happened. It tackles gender inequality which is manifested in different forms such as sexism, female oppression, female subjugation, female marginalization and other aspects of gender bias Egbai, (2016:28). Onebunne (2024: 8), observes that some people see feminism as a deserved confrontational opportunity for the women folk who seem intimidated by men's folk in their seeming fundamental opportunity in certain decisions as women. Feminism exploringly exploits some traditional practices that are particularly against women or that are very inimical to their natural dispositions as human beings.

Feminists focus on the ways in which our male-dominated historical traditions have excluded women from the intellectual and political realms. So, they make it their goal not only to describe the world but also to change it, producing a society that recognizes women and men as both different and equal Lawhead (2002:564). However, feminist activities have campaigned for women's right (right of contract, property rights, voting rights);for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion right and for reproductive rights including access to contraception and quality prenatal care; for protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; for workplace right including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women.

Divisions of Feminism

Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's history into three waves; the first wave, the second wave and the third wave. **The first wave of feminism** according to Chimakonam and Agu (2013:64) began in the late 1700s when an English woman, Mary Wollstonecraft, penned A *Vindication of the Right of Woman*. Within a year of its publication, Olympe de Gouges issued a street pamphlet in Paris titled "*Les Droits de la Famine*" (The Rights of Woman). The first wave of feminism originally focused on the promotion of equal property, rights and contract for women and also the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married women by their husbands. The first wave feminism was coined in retrospectively after the second wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities. **Second wave feminism** refers to the period of activity in the early 1960s and lasting through the late 1980s. It concerns itself with other issues of equality such as ending discrimination. **Third wave feminism** began in the early 1990s to date, arising as a response to perceived failures of the second wave and also as a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave. This wave focuses on race and class alongside some of the older contentions that are yet to be settled, especially in many third world countries. Chimakonam and Agu thus observe;

some of the concerns of feminism such as cultural, social, political, religious, economic and the wider legal issues reverberate on the topical discussions and legislative debates around the world, with variety of priorities: in Saudi Arabia, it is the right to drive and to participate in politics; in China, it is the right to have a say and to make it count, that is, it is not enough to have the right to voice one's opinion but such a right should confer on one the ability to make her opinions count in policy formation; in South Africa, it is the right to pay equity, that is, women should be entitled to equal pay with men for the

labour...but in Igboland of Nigeria, it is the freedom or right to be absolved from all forms of religious, economic, political, social and cultural discriminatory and humiliating practices. These form the bedrock of the third wave feminist contentions in Igboland. (2013:59)

Types of Feminism

Liberal Feminism: This is the most widely accepted social and political philosophy among feminists. According to the liberal feminists, society has belief that women are 'by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men Haradhan (2022: 8). So, these feminists advocate that men and women should have equal rights and women have equal opportunities as men. They demanded equal rights for voting, reproduction, abortion and child healthcare, and reaction against sexual harassment.

Socialist Feminism: As rightly puts by Arua (2006:118), the socialist feminists highlight the links between female subordination and capitalist mode of production. The argument of this tradition is that women are only significant in family or domestic life. By the essential role of women in family responsibilities as child rearing and domestic labour, the men are relieved and placed in vantage position. The socialist feminists by this position reflect concern on the efforts to break relegation and manipulation of women as private property.

Radical Feminism: Radical feminism considers the male controlled capitalist hierarchy, which it describes as sexist, as the defining feature of women's oppression. So, these feminists believe that women can free themselves only when they have done away with what they consider an inherently oppressive and dominating patriarchal system. The Radical feminists feel that there is a male-based authority and power structure and that it is responsible for oppression and inequality, and as long as the system and its values are in place, society will not be able to be reformed in any significant way. (GWA.net) there are sub-types of Radical feminism, these are cultural, separatist and anti-pornography feminism.

However, our focus here will center on separatist feminism. Nancy defines separatism as the investment of energy in women's self-hood. It is precisely an absence of androcentric focus, a refusal to allow patriarchy to control the use of gynergy. The supporters of separatist feminism hold that sexual disparities between men and women are irresolvable. Marriage is defined by radical feminists as a patriarchal institution, as it assimilates women as men's private property. They also claim the right not to have children. In fact, one of the key slogans of the radical feminism was "my body belongs to me", which reflects women's desire to reclaim their bodies in a patriarchal society that dispossesses them. In the words of Kate and Holly (2022:3), many radical feminists were separatists, to one degree or other. Some were separatists to the degree that they avoided association with men as far as practically possible. Some withdrew from male-dominated society entirely, choosing to live together with other women only, on women's lands (and some of the collectives who administered these lands refused to even let women with children have their sons on the lands). Others remained within the dominant society, but withdrew from sexual and romantic relationships with men, devoting their energies to women (which did not mean entering into sexual or romantic relationships with women instead, although some did). Yet others remained in intimate association with men, but nonetheless valued the political and other types of spaces where they could spend time with women only.

Objectives of Radical Feminism

- The abolition of patriarchy: They demand for sexual and reproductive freedom, which includes free access to abortion and contraception.
- Right to be angry, refusing to have a child, refusing to marry or even refusing to have any relations with men (separatism).

Feminist Contentions in Igboland

Feminist agitations in Igboland can be traced to 1902, during the war between the British and the people of Arochukwu, otherwise known as the Aro expedition. Chimakonam and Agu(2013: 64) explain that among the Igbo women of those days, the men folk were looked upon as “living gods”. In line with Igbo culture, husbands were regarded by their wives as their *chis* (personal gods or guardians) to protect and provide, and these women saw it as normal. For the Aro women Chimakonam and Agu earlier cited explain that British invasion represented a shake-up of this order, a dethronement of their “living gods” and their “personal gods”- the ones they called *nna-anyi*(my lord or our lord). Thus, the women agitation was not to preserve the political organogram of the Aro Empire, but to preserve what was to them the basis of the feminine existence. Besides these roles performed by men, that is, protection and provision, the Igbo socio-cultural order had room for women to enjoy some influence through the *umu-ada*, *ndi-iyom* (lineage daughters and wives’ groups) that handled feminine matters in Igboland.

By the 1920’s, the harsh realities of the colonial intrusion were beginning to tell on the Igbo women. Women were demanded to make some contributions by their husbands for the upkeep of the family. Those women who could not work were abused by their husbands. Due to change in some certain things as a result of the individualism of the western outlook, women reluctantly began to venture into economic activities. Chimakonam and Agu (2013:65) stress that as these women began to assert themselves in this way, the lines of the sacred or the “don’ts for women” were also broken. Thus, as a means of protest, Igbo women began to challenge the so-called preserve of men. 1929 was the year of the Aba Women Riot, over 10,000 women from communities around Aba stood against the colonial administration’s to tax them. They fought the colonists who had stuck up the odds against them. This uprising became an inspiration to agitations by women in Owerri and Onitsha in 1956, directed against the colonialists who they felt had robbed them of their socio-cultural relevance and their *chis* (personal gods) in the persons of their strong husbands who protected and provided for them(Aba Commission of Inquiry 1929) in Chimakonam and Agu (2013:66).

However, in the late 1980s, Igbo women who had travelled to lands beyond the Atlantic came back home to sensitize their fellow women about the need for feminist agitation. Earlier in the century, women neither agitated against the Igbo culture nor felt a need to do so. It was by the late 1980’s, that those cultural conditions were ironically seen to constitute indices for women’s subordination. So, shocking as it may sound, in order to be on the same page with feminist movement all over the world, some Igbo feminists now equate their once cherished Igbo culture with colonial posturing(chimakonam and Agu (2013:66). Prior to the shift of the 1980’s, Igbo women found nothing wrong with cultural conditions or with Igbo men. They were comfortable with the system. That is why once they got married; they take nicknames that expressed their satisfaction with the Igbo men and cultural system. Some of them bore such fond names as *Ugo di ya* (husbands pride), *Di bu ugo* (husband is my pride), *Oli aku* (wealth consumer), *Enyi di ya* (husband’s heartthrob) etc. the nick names women took became their identities in the society for life. It was a way for the women to tell the world their personal experiences. On the part of the Igbo men, they strove to show the society that they actually represented what their wives had expressed in the names.

However, in the view of the shift of the 1980’s Igbo women now censor some of the nicknames they take. Names that portray female weakness or laziness were been modified. That is, instead of *Oli aku* (wealth consumer), it was modified to *Odozi aku* (wealth builder), in place of *Ugo di ya* (husband’s beauty), they take *Ugwu di ya* (husband’s pride). This was how the shift of the 1980’s produced a remarkable change in the feminist orientation among Igbo women of Eastern Nigeria. This is because as the Igbo women began to rebel against the system, accusing men of systemic subordination, men in turn grew angry and labeled them lazy people. So, to shake off the tag of laziness, Igbo women began to abandoned names that portrayed them in ways that they could no longer identify with.

In Igboland, feminist agitations in line with the spirit of the global movement began in the late 1980s as little demonstrations, protests, court cases, pamphlets, newspaper articles, radio and TV jingles, among others. Nevertheless, victories never streamed in until the return of democracy in 1999, when sustained actions saw the enactment of legislations that favour women's positions in matters such as demeaning and discriminatory cultural practices Chimakonam and Agu (2013:68). Some of these feminist contentions in Igboland for which partial or full victories have been gained are: all forms of property rights, political rights, protection against all forms of humiliating mourning rites, and all forms of abusive cultural rights and divorce rights. These represent the first and second wave of feminism.

Radical Feminism (Separatism) a Bulldozer of Family Values in Igbo Contemporary Society

So far, Igbo women have over the years fought tirelessly to ensure that they get empowerment and equal right with men. The major stands of these early feminists was to have access to education, equal job opportunity, empowerment and freedom from all subjugation and marginalization have almost been achieved. Today, women can boast of having access to education, participating in politics and economic independence. Without this struggle, women could not attain to this level they are today. All these achievements and records created by women just these three decades or more proved that the agitations by the women really yielded much fruit. The society now believes so much that what a man can do, truly a woman can do it even better. The serious problem now is that having gained these privileges and rights, Igbo women still want to go to the extreme. Chimakonam and Agu put it thus;

Now Igbo women want so much more; they want the right to make their own economic, reproductive and political decisions; they want the right to take chieftaincy titles no longer subordinated to their husband's title; they want the right to become members of nze n'ozo title society- the apex sacred decision - making body in all Igbo land; they want the right to hold ofo (Igbo insignia of authority) staff and to strike it on earth in prayer, they want the girl child to have as much freedom as the boy child at the play arena and in community activities such as climbing trees, especially the palm tree and the kola nut tree, and to belong to masquerade groups. Above all they want the right to celebrate prayers and rituals with kola nuts. They want to be treated as equals with men in their homes and in the community, and no longer as their husbands' and fathers' property. (2013: 69)

However, this later agitation or rather contentions by Igbo women represent what is called the third wave feminism which is known as the radical feminism (separatism). Onebunne (2004:11) laments that feminism (extremes) is anti-masculinism. He maintains that feminism as a global issue has been imported into Africa. It has come to swallow a version of feminism that is healthy for us. He further avers that African feminism is not equality of female and male. It is a gender role based appreciation of trado-cultural as natural disposition of women and men. Onebunne stresses that extreme feminists adopt radical ideologies and tactics that can be alienating to others. Thus, extremism simply undermines the original goal of feminism which is equality and empowerment. Radical feminism as it stands today seems to promote superiority of women over men. It seems to promote division instead of serving tool for societal complementarity between men and women. It has challenged and changed the societal values and customs amidst negative impacts on gender equality. Most of the things these separatists are agitating for are regarded by the men and some women as not only impossible but unobtainable. Today, these contentions by Igbo women have given rise to high rate of Lesbianism, divorce and infidelity in marriage in Igbo society. Most Igbo women find

it difficult again to be submissive to their husbands. Radical feminism has come to bastardize those family values children enjoy in their families those days. Igbo women do not have time anymore to inculcate good values to their children due to too many engagements in their working places, market etc. these engagements made women too busy, too busy to address some problems in their homes, too busy to advice and watch over their children's attitudes which are their basic assignments, and at the same time cook and take care of their husbands.

It is not an over statement to say that lack of family values contributed to the insecurity and social unrest in Igbo society today. When the core people who are meant to caution their children and give them the right care and right values are busy fighting for superiority, to end marriage and to gain control of their body, then who will carry out these functions in the family? The Igbo society is as it is today because women have failed woefully to give their children the basic and necessary values they need. Children of these days lack values, that is why they engage into some nefarious acts like oke ite, yahoo, kidnapping, raping, lesbianism and prostitution without minding the dangers associated with these acts. So, Radical Feminism is a great bulldozer of family and societal values in Igbo contemporary society. It has promoted hatred towards men, disconnecting of the natural connection between men and women. It has deprived children the investment of time and care they need. It is no way in line with Igbo culture and tradition. Separatist contentions do not in any way promote the ideals and philosophy of the Igbo people. The youths of today are really under pressure. There are major things women should focus their attention to if they really want to make good changes in the society. Their family should be their number one priority and not focusing on something that is unhealthy to the society. Considering the rate of evil in Igbo land today, women need to go back and fix their homes. African feminism is not equality of female and male. Igbo women should abstain from such contentions that will do more harm than good in Igbo society.

Conclusion

Igbo women in pre-colonial era were valued, but at the same time controllable. Colonialism came and worsened the situation by creating gender imbalance in term of land ownership. As time goes on, the narrative began to change. Women began to challenge the anomalies. The issue of Aba Women Riot Pushed aside the narrative that is weak. Most characteristics of pre-colonial culture have changed in a positive way for Igbo women. The present day Igbo women are more privileged than women back in pre-colonial times. The contributions of these influential Igbo women like late Dora Akunyili, Chimamanda Adichie, Ngozi Okonjo Iwela and others have shown that women are great builders. Igbo women could achieve these progresses due to the efforts of the early feminists who were basically liberal, agitating for women empowerment and equal opportunity which have really shaped their lives. However, for lasting peace, progress and sustainable development to retain as it was in the traditional Igbo society, Igbo women should desist from all the agitations of the radical feminism. This is because, radical feminism (separatism) has come to destroy the family and societal values the Igbo society is enjoying. Their stand is not in line with Igbo culture and tradition. The insecurity, infidelity, divorce lack of values, respect and negative attitudes portrayed by the Igbo youths today are largely as a result of a shift in Igbo women's roles as mothers. This paper recommends that for harmony, peaceful co-existence and security to return in Igbo land, both gender must reconcile and stop fighting for headship. Women should create more time for their children and likewise the men. Both genders must contribute to ensure that their children receive good values. There must be reciprocal relationship.

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Chidimma N. Ezeador & George C. Okpara: The Negative Impact Of Radical Feminism On Family Values In Contemporary Igbo Society

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