

## صورة الشخصيات الذكورية في روايات اتشبي مع إشارة خاصة إلى رواية الأشياء تنهار

### *The Image of Male Characters in Achebe's Novels' with Special Reference to the Nove"l Things Fall Apart"*

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## Abstract:

The research aimed at identifying the African civilization and culture that tackled the African literature through exploring the portrait of the image of male character in Achebe's novels especially "Things Fall Apart", the study also aimed at providing the reader with knowledge of the African literature written by Achebe, and to what extent the African culture influenced Achebe's character. The study adopted the descriptive method through analytical criticism of the novels "Things Fall Apart" in order to reflect the image of the male character and to show how the writer used the art of novel to inform the reader with psychological components and cultural dimensions that affected the portrayal of this character. The study has come up with some results the most important of which are that: the writer shows that male authority dominates the Ibo community and all the individuals obey or submit to the male orders, and the male wealth is the absolute power in the African society. The results have also shown that man character dominates woman character. The research recommends taking care of the African literature that handles values, customs, and traditions that introduce the African different societies.

**Keywords:** Image of Male Characters, Achebe's Novels, Novel Things Fall Apart

## المخلص:

هدف البحث إلى اكتشاف صورة الشخصية الذكورية في أعمال أنتشي الأدبية خصوصاً رواية "أشياء تنهار". وكذلك هدف البحث إلى مد القارئ بمعرفة الأدب الأفريقي الذي كتب بواسطة أنتشي. وكذلك إلى أي مدى أثرت الثقافة الأفريقية، في شخصية الكاتب. اتبع الباحث طريقة التحليل النقدي في تحري تلك الصور وملامحها حتى يتسنى اكتشاف كيفية أعمال الكاتب لتصوير تلك الشخصية. توصلت الدراسة إلى عدة نتائج "استعمال عناصر الطبيعة والخرافة هي أهم سمات الأب الأفريقي التي استفاد منها الكاتب. والاستفادة من الأمثال والحكم هي تلك الملامح الأساسية التي

وصفها الكاتب وهي الأمثال والحكم هي التي تغذي الأدب الأفريقي. وتسيطر الأمثال على كل حوارات الكاتب الدرامية خصوصاً في "أشياء تنهار" والتي احتوت على خمسة عشر مثلاً وحكمة، وكذلك احتوت الروايتين على الأساطير والحكايات الشعبية والشعر والأغاني والمفردات اللغوية المحلية. وكذلك فإن للسياسة وثقافة الرجل الأبيض اثر كبير في أعمال الكاتب، ونوصي الدراسة بالآتي: من الأهمية بمكان الإطلاع على الشخصية الأفريقية القيادية من خلال الأدب الأفريقي، يجب تشجيع الطلاب في المدارس والجامعات على البحث في الأدب الأفريقي، وكذلك يوصي البحث بأن كل أعمال الكاتب "أجبي" يجب أن تدرس في كليات التربية والآداب.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** صورة الشخصيات الذكورية، روايات انتشبي، رواية الاشياء تنهار

## 1- Introduction

The importance of African literature has come from its depth and availability of oral traditions of proverbs. Mythological narratives and poetry, folk tales and dramatic and lyric forms. The importance of " Things Fall Apart novel derives not simply from the theme but also from the complete presentation of male characters in action, in living reaction to their fate, showing their imaginative mythical world and confers upon its relevance and truth. In this study the researcher tries to deal with the image of male characters in Achebe's novels. It is clear that the African cultures vary among themselves.

Since African Literature is a fundamental part of Global literature in general, it is quite obvious that it gives pleasure and enjoyment to the readers and learners of literature and it is a window through which people can overlook what Africa is and what its people are and what their traditions and customs are. Besides, Chinua Achebe has a different style of literary writing; he has had a unique brand of depiction in his novel. " Things Fall Apart".

## 1.1 Statement of The Problem

The researcher finds himself interested and impressed by Chinua Achebe's fictional works specially the characters in his novels. The study deals with Achebe's Characters in "Things Fall Apart". Besides, it is very interesting to deal with the themes of the novel since themes have something to do with the different aspects of life; the researcher considers them of great value to be stated.

## 1.2 Significance of the study

This study attempts to provide visions, insights and concepts to help, learners, researchers, EFL lecturers, Syllabus designers, material writers, the ones who are concerned with African Literature, and other educational institutions to know more about African culture and shed a light on the image of male characters in Achebe's novels. It is also hoped to be of great value to those who are interested in African Literature specially Chinua Achebe writings. The study is also expected to give deep insight into the African Literature and can be a base for further studies.

## 1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To explore the portrait of the image of male character in Achebe novels.
2. To provide the readers with insights into African literature written by Achebe.
3. To find out to what extent African culture influences Achebe's characters.

## 1.4 Questions of the Study

- 1- What is the noticeable portrait of image of male character in Achebe's Novels?

2- What insights are to be provided for readers?

3- To what extent does African culture influence Achebe's characters?

### 1.5 Hypotheses of the study

1- A noticeable portrait of image of male characters in Achebe's novels is key factor in writing novels.

2- considerable insights into African culture can be provided for the readers of Literature when reading Chinua Achebe's Novels.

3- African Culture has a huge influence on Achebe's characters.

### 1.6 Methodology of the Study

This study adopts the analytical approach through critical analysis of Achebe's novel " *Things Fall Apart*" which has been analyzed to reflect how Achebe portrays the image of male character.

## 2- Literature Review

### 2-1 Achebe's Biography

Chinua Achebe was born on 16th of November, 1930. He is a Nigerian writer, critic and poet and he is one of the most-read African authors. His publications have mostly concentrated on African politics, the image of Africa and Africans in the West, and the complexity of pre-colonial African culture and civilization, as well as the repercussions of colonialism on African societies". His well-known literary criticism *An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"* is regarded by many to be the most aggressive, discussed, and influential book of its sort. Achebe denounced Joseph Conrad as "a thorough going racist" who presented Africa as "a

metaphysical battlefield devoid of any recognized humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril”.

There are several features of realism that exist in Achebe's work *A Man of the People*, and reflects significant political and social events that have taken place in Nigeria since its publication in 1967. It also examines *A Man of the People* as a work of fiction amid other realistic books. Generally, English-language literature falls under the genres of romance or realism. Romances seek to reflect life as one may expect it to be, and build a generally heroic, adventurous, or gorgeous environment. In contrast, works of realism represent the world as it truly appears. Books by realists like as Defoe tend to adopt a reportorial method, presenting facts in a circumstantial, matter-of-fact type of way, and create for the reader an appearance of genuine experience.

Abrams (1971: 141) argues that the term 'realistic novel' "is more properly used to works which are realistic both in theme and method... across the entire than in portions...." Additionally, Gray (1992: 241) has remarked that realism "is best employed for authors who demonstrate specific care to portray a realistic image of truth, either in their narrative style, or through their serious approach to their subject matter". Among English-speaking African novels, Chinua Achebe has been especially effective in providing a realistic portrayal of an African milieu. He is one of the prominent authors from the African subcontinent who have provided a new direction to English-language African writing by describing, truthfully, an African milieu and giving voice to a feeling of rising disdain and dissatisfaction among its populace. Carroll (1975: 11) argues that: "Achebe seems to be perpetually tormented by longing for the "rediscovery of Africa's past". His works seem to be an effort to come to grips with a battle, or, "as it were, to carefully chronicle his meeting with history, his people's past" Ngugi (1975:

39) as well as to assist his “society restore confidence in itself and put aside the complexities of the years of denigration and self-abasement” (Achebe, 1975: 43). (Achebe, 1975: 43). Such realism is clear in Achebe’s books; he has written about the subjugated, exploited majority of the African people, and their vision of the future after obtaining freedom from colonial authority and escaping from the “colonial complex” (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972: 8). (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972: 8). Explaining that this past influences their lives, Achebe adds, “I would be very delighted if my books (particularly the ones I put in the past) did no more than show my readers that their history with all its faults was not one long night of barbarism from which the first European working on God’s behalf saved them” (Achebe, 1975: 44). (Achebe, 1975: 44). Novels such as *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *Arrow of God* (1964), *No Longer At Ease* (1960), *A Man of the People* (1967), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) exemplify his goal of social realism and his attempts to restore the lost dignity of his people by allowing his readers to examine their past and to resolve what he terms a ‘crisis in the soul.’ *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) presents contemporary, autonomous, post-colonial (in this context, neo-colonial) metropolitan Africa. It recounts the general, social and individual volatility inside a hypothetical late 20th century African nation called Kanga, which obviously reflects Nigeria. The story dramatizes political confrontations amongst Africans, depicts the enduring impact of Britain and other Western nations on African economy and culture, and concludes with a government being ousted by a coup. In a conversation with Donatus Nwoga, Achebe described his objective as a novelist. Duerden and Pieterse (1972: 7) state that:

*I believe that if we take something for granted, we may be disregarding our appropriate duty and failing to consider what precisely our society is and what its requirements are instead. Chinua Achebe's A Man of the*



*People contains elements of realism that I was trying to convey. I believe that we have a very important function to play as writers and educators... this is only one of the roles of the writer as a teacher" "What can I do, what can I contribute; that is what I was trying to convey".*

In the next chapter, characterization in Achebe's works will be covered.

## 2-2 Character in Achebe's Novel

In common with many other African authors, Achebe is of the opinion that aesthetic and literary works should be concerned mainly with societal issues. He has said that "art is, and always has been, at the service of man," rather than being an aim in itself, and that it is not answerable to anyone or anything. As he puts it: "Every excellent narrative and every good book should convey an important moral message and serve an important literary function".

Achebe's collaboration with Heinemann resulted in the publication of four further novels: No Longer at Ease (the 1960 sequel to Things Fall Apart), Arrow of God (1964), A Man of the People (1966), and Anthills of the Savannah (1997). (1987). He also created and published a number of children's books, in which he expresses his fundamental beliefs in forms and language that are intelligible to young children.

Several of Achebe's later writings deal with the challenges that Nigeria and other newly independent African countries are dealing with. He attributes Nigeria's difficulties to a lack of leadership that has existed since the country's inception. In 1983, he released The Trouble with Nigeria, a book that was a scathing indictment of corrupt leaders in his own Nigeria. Achebe has also written two collections of short tales and three collections of essays, which have all been published. He is the founding editor of



Heinemann's African Writers series, the creator and publisher of Uwa Ndi Igbo: A Bilingual Journal of Igbo Life and Arts, and the editor of Okike, Nigeria's foremost journal of new writing. He was born in Ibadan, Nigeria, and grew up in Lagos.

To summarize, Achebe is a well-educated individual. He is a talented writer, poet, playwright, and story teller, among other things. He is not a romantic idealist who believes in a single way of living. He is considered to be one of the pioneers and founders of African literature. He reflects African literature in its purest, most original, and most tranquil form before to the arrival of the white man, as well as the transformation of indigenous culture during and after colonialism. As a result, the younger generations learn about their ancestors' heritage and culture, which is full of beauty and dignity, via Achebe's novels. Achebe (1964: 90) informs us of the following:

*"... Unlike Europeans, African peoples did not learn about culture for the first time from them: that their civilizations were not senseless, but that they often possessed a philosophy of tremendous depth, worth, and beauty. because they had poetry and, above all, that they possessed dignity... We have to acknowledge that, like other people's pasts, ours has both its positive and negative aspects."*

Achebe is deserving of the highest honor and award that has been bestowed upon him, as summarized by Muza (1994: 2) in one metaphor: "the eagle on the Iroko (the tallest and strongest tree in the forest). Climbing the tree is not an easy task; that is why the Igbo proverb insists that one does not climb the Iroko twice." After successfully ascending the Iroko, the climber should seize and collect whatever he or she discovers since he or she may not be able to do it again. The eagle, on the other hand, continues to ascend the tree and fly over it again and over. Musu (1994: 2) goes on to explain that:

“The eagle Chinua Achebe symbolizes the field of African literature in the above metaphor, while the Iroko represents the field of African literature. While Achebe's literary achievements have risen and soared above the iroko many times more than those of any other African authors, his work has made significant contributions to the development of what is now known as contemporary African literature”.

Achebe was raised by Christian parents in the Igbo village of Ogidi in southern Nigeria, where he excelled in school and was awarded a scholarship to pursue undergraduate studies at the University of Lagos. As a university student, he grew attracted by global religions and traditional African civilizations, and he started writing short tales about them. Following graduation, he began working for the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, and he soon relocated to the Nigerian capital of Lagos. *Things Fall Apart*, published in the late 1950s, brought him international acclaim; his following works include *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1970). (1987). Achebe writes his books in English and has spoken out in favor of the language's usage., a "language of colonizers", in African literature. In 1975, his lecture *An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"* became the focus of controversy, for its criticism of Joseph Conrad as "a bloody racist".

When the area of Biafra broke away from Nigeria in 1967, Achebe became a fervent advocate of Biafran independence and worked as an ambassador for the people of the newly formed country of Biafra. His people were suffering as a result of the conflict, and as malnutrition and brutality took their toll, he called for assistance to the people of Europe and the Americas. His political involvement began when the Nigerian government retook the region in 1970, but he soon resigned due to his frustration with the corruption and elitism that he had witnessed during his time there. In the

1970s, he spent many years in the United States, and he returned to the country in 1990 after a vehicle accident left him severely paralyzed.

Achebe's works are mostly concerned with the traditions of Igbo culture, the impact of Christian influences, and the conflict of values that occurred during and after the colonial period in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. His technique is primarily influenced by the Igbo oral tradition, and he blends direct narration with depictions of folk tales, proverbs, and oratory to create a unique blend of storytelling and oratory. In addition, he has written a variety of short tales, children's books, and anthology collections of essays. Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, United States, where he is now the David and Marianna Fisher University Professor and Professor of Africana Studies, has named him to this position. Achebe died at the age of 82 after suffering from a short illness.

### 2.3 Characters in *Things Fall Apart*:

In this section, the researcher will discuss the different characters in "*things Fall Apart*":

#### 2.3.1 Okonkwo:

A powerful clan head in the Umuofia region. Okonkwo's humiliation at the sight of his wasteful, effeminate, and lazy father, Unoka, has motivated him to achieve success from early infancy. Okonkwo's tenacity and military skill have elevated him to a position of prominence within his tribe, and he has amassed enough cash to sustain three women and their children. Okonkwo's sad weakness is that he is paralyzed by the fear of seeming weak, much like his father. A consequence of this is that he makes hasty decisions, causing himself and his family a tremendous lot of distress and misery.

Okonkwo is the subject of an in-depth investigation.

### 2.3.1 Nwoye:

Okonkwo's eldest son, whom Okonkwo considers to be weak and slack in his work. Okonkwo hits Nwoye on a regular basis, aiming to address the flaws that he detects in the young man. Nwoye starts to demonstrate more male conduct as a result of Ikemefuna's influence, much to the delight of Okonkwo. However, he continues to have reservations about certain of the laws and norms of his tribe, and he finally converts to Christianity, an act that Okonkwo considers "effeminate." According to Okonkwo, Nwoye suffers from the same flaws that his father, Unoka, had in large quantities.

Nwoye is the subject of an in-depth investigation.

### 2.3.3 Ezinma:

Okonkwo's second wife, Ekwefi, had just one kid, who was named Okonkwo. In Ekwefi's world, Ezinma is the focus of attention since she is the only one of her mother's 10 children to have survived through infancy. Their relationship is unusual in that Ezinma addresses Ekwefi by her first name and is considered as an equal by her. She is also Okonkwo's favorite kid because she understands him better than any of his other children and reminds him of Ekwefi when she was the village beauty. Ezinma is also Okonkwo's favorite daughter because she understands him better than any of his other daughters. Okonkwo, on the other hand, seldom expresses his feelings of love because he is concerned that doing so may make him seem weak. Furthermore, he wishes that Ezinma had been born as a male because he believes she would have been the ideal son.

Ezinma is the subject of an in-depth examination.

### 2.3.4 Ikemefuna:

Okonkwo received a boy as a gift from a nearby town. Ikemefuna is a young woman who lives in the hut of Okonkwo's first wife and rapidly gains the affection of Okonkwo's children. He forms a particularly strong bond with Nwoye, Okonkwo's eldest son, who looks up to him and looks up to him in return. Okonkwo has strong feelings for Ikemefuna, whom he refers to as "father" and who is a model clansman, but he is reluctant to express his feelings because he is concerned that doing so would make him seem weak to the other men.

### 2.3.5 Mr. Brown:

The first white missionary to go to Umuofia was Reverend Dr. William F. Smith. Mr. Brown establishes a philosophy of compromise, understanding, and non-aggression between his flock and the clan, which is followed to the letter. Eventually, he makes connections with significant clansmen and begins construction on a school and hospital in Umuofia. His approach differs from that of Reverend Smith in that he strives to politely appeal to the tribe's value system rather than forcefully imposing his faith on them.

### 2.3.6 Reverend James Smith:

Mr. Brown's replacement will be a missionary. Reverend Smith, on the other hand, is unyielding and uncompromising, in contrast to Mr. Brown. He expects his converts to abandon all of their indigenous beliefs, and he displays little regard for indigenous traditions or culture in his behavior with them. He embodies the traditional white imperialist, and his actions exemplify the ills associated with colonialism. He actively irritates his

audience, provoking them to rage, and even indirectly encourages some rather significant sins via Enoch, who is a member of his church.

### 2.3.7 Uchendu:

Okonkwo's mother's younger brother was born in this year. When Okonkwo and his family visit to Mbanta, Uchendu greets them with open arms and urges them to be thankful for the comfort that his country provides them should they offend the dead—particularly his mother, who is buried there. Uchendu himself has suffered: he has lost all but one of his six wives, and he has buried twenty-two of his twenty-two children. To Okonkwo, who acts impetuously and without thinking, he serves as a foil. A foil (a character whose emotions or actions emphasize, by means of contrast, the feelings or actions of another character) is a figure who contrasts the emotions or actions of another character.

### 2.3.8 The District Commissioner:

He was a high-ranking official in the white colonial administration of Nigeria. The District Commissioner is the stereotypical racist colonialist, believing that he knows all about local African traditions and cultures, and he has little regard for them. A ethnographic study of local African tribes is what he intends to do with his life experiences, and the concept of such a research represents his demeaning and reductive approach on racial relations.

### 2.3.9 Unoka:

In the presence of Okonkwo's father, whom Okonkwo has been embarrassed of since infancy Unoka was seen as a coward and a spendthrift by the rest of the clan. He never had a position of authority throughout his life, and he relied on his clansmen for financial assistance, seldom repaying his obligations. He never pursued a warrior career because he was terrified

by the sight of blood. Furthermore, he died as a result of a heinous sickness. On the plus side, Unoka seems to have been a gifted musician who was also kind, albeit a little sluggish. He might have been a romantic idealist who was mismatched for the chauvinistic society into which he was born. Ten years have passed after his death, and the book begins.

### 2.3.10 Obierika

Okonkwo's close friend, whose daughter's wedding serves as a source of joy early in the book, is the focus of this chapter. It is Obierika's responsibility to watch out for Okonkwo, selling his yams to guarantee that Okonkwo does not suffer financial ruin while in exile and providing consolation to Okonkwo when he is sad. Obierika, like Nwoye, criticizes some of the tribe's customary rules and regulations.

Ekwefi - Okonkwo's second wife, who was formerly the village's most beautiful woman. Ekwefi left her first spouse to live with Okonkwo after a long separation. Because Ezinma is her sole surviving kid, as the rest of her nine children perished in infancy, Ekwefi is continuously concerned that she would lose Ezinma as well. Ekwefi is excellent friends with Chielo, the priestess of the goddess Agbala, who is also a personal friend of Ekwefi's.

### 2.3.11 Enoch

In Umuofia, there is a zealous convert to the Christian faith. Enoch's rude act of pulling the mask off an egwugwu at an annual ritual to honor the earth god leads to the climactic conflict between the indigenous and colonial judicial systems, which takes place in the aftermath of the event. However, whilst Mr. Brown first restrains Enoch's passion in the sake of societal peace, Reverend Smith later expresses approval for his fanaticism.



### 2.3.12 Ogbuefi Ezeudu

The village's eldest man, as well as one of the most significant clan elders and leaders, is over 100 years old. Ogbuefi Ezeudu was a famous warrior in his childhood, and he is now a messenger for the Oracle, who sends him messages.

### 2.3.13 Chielo

In Umuofia, there is a priestess who is devoted to the Oracle of the goddess Agbala, and she is known as Agbala. Chielo is a divorced mother of two who has two children. Ekwefi is a dear friend of hers, and she is particularly fond to Ezinma, whom she refers to as "my daughter". In order to aid in the purification of Ezinma and the appeasement of the gods, she carries her for kilometers on her back at one point.

### 2.3.14 Akunna

Umuofia's clan chief is named Umuofia. Acknowledging each other's religious convictions in a peaceful manner, Akunna's effect on Mr. Brown supports Mr. Brown's goal of converting the greatest number of clansmen possible by working with, rather than against, their religious beliefs. Although Akunna does not express or rationalize his religious system in this manner, he does draw some startling similarities between his style of worship and the Christian missionaries' style of worship in his process of doing so.

### 2.3.15 Nwakibie

One of Okonkwo's affluent clansmen takes a risk on the young man by loan him 800 seed yams, which is double the quantity of yams Okonkwo requests. Thus, Nwakibie assists Okonkwo in establishing the foundations of his own riches, position, and financial independence.

### **2.3.16 Mr. Kiaga**

A native-turned-Christian missionary who comes in Mbanta and converts Nwoye as well as a large number of others

### **2.3.17 Okagbue Uyanwa**

Okonkwo seeks the assistance of a well-known medicine man in order to cope with Ezinma's health difficulties.

### **2.3.18 Maduka**

Obierika's kid is named Obierika. Maduka is in his mid-teens when he wins a wrestling competition. Okonkwo wishes he had boys that were as promising and masculine as Maduka.

### **2.3.19 Obiageli:**

Okonkwo's first wife had a daughter, who was named Okonkwo. Despite the fact that Obiageli is similar in age to Ezinma, Ezinma has a significant amount of control over her.

### **2.3.20 Ojiugo**

His youngest wife and mother of Nkechi, she is Okonkwo's third wife. During the Week of Peace, Okonkwo defeats Ojiugo.

## **2.4 Achebe's Role and Beliefs**

From Igbo partial status to the ascent of African literature, Achebe's father used to join missionaries, through whom he obtained education. Achebe was raised in a devout home where hymns were regularly sung, and he became well-versed in all of the African beliefs and customs. The result is that Achebe was raised in the Christian faith and remained little more than

that ever since then. Sykes (2000: 4) defines a formalized formalized formalized formalized formalized formalized (Sykes, 2000: 4).

According to Conch (1971: 181), Achebe was a Bible reader who read the Bible at all hours of the day and night. He used to travel to his uncles' property to take part in pagan celebrations that consisted of rice and stew, which he enjoyed. Achebe was delighted to see that there was no trace of idolatry in the cuisine. When the two cultures that vied for his loyalty were at odds, he did not have any identity crisis.

In this regard, Achebe's views and writings depict a world on the verge of calamity. It is his goal as an African writer to utilize English in a manner that effectively conveys these thoughts and values without distorting the language to the point where its usefulness as a medium of international interchange is diminished. So Achebe establishes himself as an intriguing figure who attracts the attention of his friends, scholarship committees, the media, and publishing houses. All of them are impressed by Achebe's innovative writing style, as well as the contemporary experiment with which he presents the African past, beliefs, and history in new sorts of fiction. It's a new experience, speaking African English, for me. Achebe (1975: 55) explains why he prefers to write in "African English" by stating that A new voice is emerging from Africa, one that speaks of the African experience in a language that is understood around the world. Hence my response to the question: Can an African ever learn English well enough to be able to express himself creatively in the English language? Yes, without a doubt...

In order to create an English that is global, Achebe combines it with his mother's dialects and pidgins in order to communicate his unique experience to the world, which he successfully does in his writing.

Achebe lives at the crossroads of two cultures: the indigenous culture and that which has developed after colonialism, to sum it all up. As he has grown older, he has come to despise anything that is archaic and out of date. For example, he rejects the evil forces, superstitions, and everything else that appears in Joseph Conrad's "African's Hear of Darkness", Because many Africans and Europeans believe Conrad's views and judgments about Africa and African culture, Achebe attempts to correct these incorrect beliefs and ideas about Africa throughout his novels, particularly in his most recent novel, Home and Exile 2000. According to Otchet (2001: 5), Achebe critiques his society's religious rituals and beliefs without casting judgment on them, and this is true. He defers to his readers' judgements on the subject.

### 3.5 Analysis and Criticism:

#### 3.5.1 Image of Male "Things Fall Apart"

In this section, there will be a survey on the image of the masculine in Chenu Achebe's novels, with reference to other authors. to " Things Fall Apart"

#### 3.5.2 Gender Relationships In Igbo Culture

Despite the fact that colonialism provided new chances for social activity, it was discovered that it merely served to amplify the already significant gender disparity in Igbo culture. Okonkwo (2009: 2) asserts the following:

*"Developing a historical awareness of gender relations in Igbo society may aid in the development of a political understanding of national cultural imperialism from a political standpoint. Based on the concepts of cultural imperialism, it examines how colonialism has contributed to the development of gender discourse in Igbo culture and how this has*

*contributed to the evolution of gender discourse in Igbo society. According to several previous studies, gender equality in Igbo culture has been on a steady decline from the precolonial period, compared to what was possible before colonization. As this tendency is examined, it seems to cooperate with the assumptions of national cultural imperialism, therefore disentangling the tangled notion of cultural imperialism from its congested state”.*

Despite improved educational and career options for men and women, traditional roles for men and women continued to exist. Traditionally, while children are very young, they are shaped into the appropriate gender role for which they were born. Children in Igbo culture are largely treated the same from the time they are born until they are approximately five or six years old. According to Ottenberg: "After this, boys migrate away from the family situation, toward a sense of belonging to the father and toward males, while girls stay in the mother-centered home milieu" (2006: 121). Adventure, toughness, and the ability to think for themselves are instilled in young boys. Girl children must rely heavily on their moms as they grow up, and this teaches them a kind of dependency that will be useful in their future responsibilities as spouses and mothers. Boys and girls develop a diverse set of abilities from one another. Girls acquire home-making skills, as well as a few artistic abilities such as dance, singing, and pottery-making, as they go through the program. Men and boys study a range of talents, including how to do sacrifices, how to use masks and musical instruments, how to develop physical abilities, such as wrestling, so that they may learn to resist pain, as well as how to perform sacrifices and develop physical skills. According to Amadiume (1987) in her book, "Sexual restraint and preparation for their future roles as spouses and mothers were emphasized throughout the socialization of young females. In contrast, males' socialization emphasized

masculinity, which was associated with traits such as virility, aggressiveness, bravery, and authority " (94). The main difference between males and girls is that girls are educated to be excellent spouses and mothers, whilst boys are taught to be warriors and leaders. A decent lady is one who would prioritize her responsibilities as a wife and mother. She should provide for her husband's needs and support him, as well as do all she can to safeguard and rear her children. Men were leaders and combatants, and they were also the ones who carried on their father's lineage, as was the case in the ancient world.

Marriage is very significant in Igbo culture, both historically and in more current times. Males and girls are not considered adults unless they have a child or get legally married. Amadiume, amadiume, amadiume (1987: 57).

While women are under more pressure to marry, males are also expected to do so, and if they take a long time to do so, they may be seen as unmotivated or uninterested in marriage. Marriage is critical for both men and women in order to achieve adult social status and be able to fully participate in their own societies. "As adults, marriage provides them with the acceptable social position that society expects of them in order to make a positive contribution to communal life. The establishment of suitable marital status, on the other hand, is merely the first step in the process of ascent up the social expectations ladder for women. Prerequisites for marital stability are motherhood and the birth of a son, in that order of importance "Okeke-Ihejirika is a traditional dance form in Okeke-Ihejirika (2004: 43). People from the Igbo ethnic group are considered adults after they have married, but they must have children in order to completely fulfill their social responsibilities in society. As part of their gender role, women are supposed to take on the role of mother and to protect their children. Even in more

contemporary times, when a woman may seek greater education and a well-paying profession, this is their major expectation. Men must have children in order to demonstrate their masculinity. It is often believed that men who do not have children, particularly boys, are not really regarded to be actual men, and that men who do not have sons are seen to be less of a man. Polygamy is prevalent in Igbo culture, and this is one of the reasons behind it. For starters, it served as a social status symbol. It was necessary to be polygamous in order to be accepted into the administrative layers of the Ogbako Umunna and Oha-na-Eze, and this became a requirement for advancement (28, Dike). Having a large number of spouses and children was considered a symbol of affluence and a path to rising to the highest echelons of society. More significantly, it was a mechanism for a man to guarantee that his lineage continued and that he had a son who would carry on the family name. Polygamy, as well as the practice of taking on mistresses, continues to exist in modern times. Ottenberg is a town in Germany (1989: 344).

It is crucial to remember that, despite the fact that European influence on current Nigerian society has caused many to minimize the importance of women in Ibo culture, even historically, Ibo females have historically had great financial position in their own right.

Ibo culture may be defined as patriarchal, and while men did pay a bride dowry to practically buy their brides, women were by no means wholly subjugated to their male counterparts. Labor is divided according to gender in Ibo society, which is a significant component of the culture. Men are the primary breadwinners in their families, and their capacity to provide for their families is of enormous societal importance. Their work in the labor division mirrors this overriding theme; their home responsibilities are mostly outside in nature, and they are in charge of paying payments. Men are responsible



for the upkeep of the community, the harvesting of crops, and the resolution of conflicts. Female work is often centered on the house and is associated with domestic tasks such as cooking and cleaning. Women breastfeed their children, but responsibility for punishment is shared between the parents. This distinction is seen as complementing rather than as one that allocates supremacy to male work over female labor in terms of productivity.

It also extends to the political realm, where women are represented in all-female councils and other political formations that are similar to their male counterparts in function. As previously said, just because these feminine components are female, does not imply that they are any less strong; in many indigenous communities, women pick an Omu, or queen, as their leader, who has authority over both sexes. In other circumstances, the most influential person in a village will be the oldest lady in the community. Overall, postmenopausal women have great social standing and are even called honorary men in certain circles. Achebe(2005)

The importance of chastity in traditional Ibo culture is debatable; nonetheless, marriage is tremendously significant, as is fertility and child-rearing, which are of fundamental importance. When a woman is pregnant or after giving birth, particularly to boys, she is held in the highest regard.

Women may leave their husbands or bring them before a court of law for a variety of offenses, the most of which are related to failure to care for the family throughout the course of a marriage. It is possible for a woman to file for divorce if her husband is unable to perform sexually or if she is dissatisfied with his sexual performance, which demonstrates the importance put on male sexual prowess in Ibo society. Consequently, adultery is anticipated and tolerated, and polygamy is widely practiced in the community. Some women like the addition of new wives to the family since

it reduces the amount of work they have to perform at home. Because women were even allowed to have lovers in old culture, the practice of iko mbara (extramarital partnerships) might be seen as a leveling tool for women. Olawoye, Janice E., and colleagues (2004: 15)

The fact that men pay a bridewealth and therefore practically buy their wives means that their wives' wealth and property is legally theirs to own. However, the majority of women are involved in their own economic efforts and, in reality, have complete authority over their financial matters. Another reason why polygamy may be beneficial to a main wife was that they would have more time to engage in private commerce as a result of the arrangement. Women are also regarded strong on a sexual level; nowadays, some men refer to their girlfriends as "razorblades" because of the way their mistresses drain their bank accounts. This is based on the conventional perception of sexual desire as potentially hazardous, as well as the recognition of female power to influence men via sexual relations. Ethnology is the study of people from different cultures (2001: 129-152)

I discovered that, despite the fact that colonialism provided new chances for social mobilization, it merely served to amplify the already significant gender disparity that exists in Igbo culture. Despite improved educational and career options for men and women, traditional roles for men and women continued to exist. Dike is an acronym that stands for "Dike is an acronym that stands for "Dike is an acronym that stands for "Dike is an acronym that stands for ( 2001)

Traditionally, while children are very young, they are shaped into the appropriate gender role for which they were born. Children in Igbo culture are largely treated the same from the time they are born until they are approximately five or six years old. According to Ottenberg: "After this,

boys migrate away from the family situation, toward a sense of belonging to the father and toward males, while girls stay in the mother-centered home milieu" (1989: 120). Adventure, toughness, and the ability to think for themselves are instilled in young boys. Girl children must rely heavily on their moms as they grow up, and this teaches them a kind of dependency that will be useful in their future responsibilities as spouses and mothers. Boys and girls develop a diverse set of abilities from one another. Girls acquire home-making skills, as well as a few artistic abilities such as dance, singing, and pottery-making, as they go through the program. Boys acquire a range of skills, such as how to execute sacrifices and how to use masks, among other things.

and musical instruments, as well as developing physical abilities, like as wrestling, in order to teach them how to endure pain, are all important. The author of a madiume's book writes, "Sexual control and preparation for their future responsibilities as spouses and mothers were emphasized throughout the socialization of young females. Okeko(2004: 30).

Socialization of boys, on the other hand, emphasised masculinity, associated with virility, aggressiveness, courage, and authority" (94). (94). The main difference between males and girls is that girls are educated to be excellent spouses and mothers, whilst boys are taught to be warriors and leaders. A decent lady is one who would prioritize her responsibilities as a wife and mother. She should provide for her husband's needs and support him, as well as do all she can to safeguard and rear her children. Men were leaders and combatants, and they were also the ones who carried on their father's lineage, as was the case in the ancient world. Marriage is very significant in Igbo culture, both historically and in more current times. Males and girls are not considered adults unless they have a child or get legally married. Amadiume, amadiume, amadiume (1987).

While women are under more pressure to marry, males are also expected to do so, and if they take a long time to do so, they may be seen as unmotivated or uninterested in marriage. Marriage is critical for both men and women in order to achieve adult social status and be able to fully participate in their own societies. "As adults, marriage provides them with the acceptable social position that society expects of them in order to make a positive contribution to communal life. The establishment of suitable marital status, on the other hand, is merely the first step in the process of ascent up the social expectations ladder for women.

Prerequisites for marital stability are motherhood and the birth of a son, in that order of importance "Okeke-Ihejirika is a traditional dance form in Okeke-Ihejirika (2004: 43). People from the Igbo ethnic group are considered adults after they have married, but they must have children in order to completely fulfill their social responsibilities in society. As part of their gender role, women are supposed to take on the role of mother and to protect their children. Even in more contemporary times, when a woman may seek greater education and a well-paying profession, this is their major expectation. Men must have children in order to demonstrate their masculinity. It is often believed that men who do not have children, particularly boys, are not really regarded to be actual men, and that men who do not have sons are seen to be less of a man.

Polygamy is prevalent in Igbo culture, and this is one of the reasons behind it. For starters, it served as a social status symbol. In the Ogbako Umunna and the Oha-na-Eze, polygamy was made a requirement for entry into the administrative echelons of the Ogbako Umunna and the Oha-na-Eze, according to Dike (2001: 28). Having a large number of spouses and children was considered a symbol of affluence and a path to rising to the highest echelons of society. More significantly, it was a mechanism for a man to

guarantee that his lineage continued and that he had a son who would carry on the family name. Polygamy, as well as the practice of taking on mistresses, continues to exist in modern times. Ottenberg(1989)

### 3.6 Image of Male in "*Things Fall Apart*"

Okonkwo, a guy who represents masculinity in a culture that places a high emphasis on conventional male attributes, is introduced to us in *Things Fall Apart*. He is a conservative husband and father who strives to distinguish himself from his slacker father, Unoka, by working hard. In terms of both strength and influence (he was formerly the undefeated wrestling champion of the nine Igbo villages for seven years), Okonkwo is a guy who settles all issues by violence or the fear of violence. Certainly, by showing an image of Igbo masculinity as a figure who is difficult to empathize with, Achebe questions preconceived notions about what it means to be a man in today's society. The first half of the book exposes us to traditional Igbo culture, including its religion, customs, laws, rituals, and other social behaviors. The second half of the novel continues the introduction. According to Achebe's portrayal of Igbo civilization, the people of the region have a vibrant and rich culture, which significantly challenges the colonial notion that Africa was a dark and primitive land. *Things Fall Apart* has unquestionably established itself as one of the most powerful literary demonstrations of Africa claiming its own right to identify itself in the modern world. It has sold more than 8 million copies in its native language of English alone, and it has been translated into 50 additional languages as of this writing. *Things Fall Apart* is considered the founding work of contemporary African literature and is a must-read for anybody interested in learning about African society from an African perspective. It also reveals the intricacy of African thinking, which was omitted from European colonial records until very recently. *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe, presents an alternate view of Africa to the

traditional colonial depictions of the continent. Because Africa is still seen as a poverty-stricken, war-torn continent in western civilization, these colonial stereotypes have survived to the current day. In addition to contributing to a more comprehensive knowledge of Africa, African literature also serves as a valuable counterbalance to the restricted and unfavorable western perceptions of the continent that are often presented in the media. *Things Fall Apart* is an engaging book that raises important concerns about Africa and challenges conventional notions about the continent. Make sure that you read the book if you haven't already. If not for the plot, then at the very least for the many wonderful Igbo proverbs included inside! "While an animal scratches its hurting flank against a tree, a man requests that his kinsman scratch him".

### 3.6.1 On Masculinity

From an early point in the work, it is evident that Okonkwo's sense of his own self-worth and his sense of masculinity are intricately intertwined with one another. When I was a kid. In his childhood, his family did not have the authority and social standing that he would later want as an adult. Okonkwo's father was, according to Okonkwo, a slacker who lacked drive and desire. In part because of these qualities, Okonkwo was raised in relative poverty, and many of the stronger, more ambitious men in the hamlet looked down their noses at the young guy. As soon as Okonkwo was able to put his skills to use, it became evident that he was destined for greatness. There were no traces of his father's vices in him; instead, he had a strong work ethic and a sense of responsibility to both clan and family. Okonkwo believes that it is his responsibility as a man to be strong, to provide for his vices that were prevalent in his ancestors, and to uphold the traditions that the tribe has prescribed to for hundreds, if not thousands of years. "It is my duty as a man to be strong, to provide for my vices that were prevalent in my ancestors,"



Okonkwo says. Okonkwo, despite the fact that certain features of this new religion and governance may be beneficial, does not perceive them that way. He does not like to conceive of his forefathers or himself as having done anything wrong, and he will not believe that any new concepts of government or religion may be better than the old methods of doing things. However, although this is simply one instance of disagreement, this difference in ideology may be found across the clan, thereby tearing the group asunder.

His conceptions of manhood, family values, and a feeling of masculine responsibility are all quite old and conventional, much like Okonkwo. When new concepts are brought to him in the shape of European religion and culture, Okonkwo, like many others, is unable to open his mind to the new ideas and refuses to accept them as legitimate alternatives. In the process, there is conflict and the disintegration of clan values and connections that have been passed down generation after generation. It is clear by the conclusion of the story that the clan has been irrevocably affected as a result of neither group's willingness to surrender its beliefs or philosophy.

If it hadn't been for the fact that it was first associated with the Christian guardian angel, which is available to people of both genders, the Chi notion would have presumed masculinity. Despite this, scholars have tended to evoke masculinity in their explanations of the idea in English by using masculine nouns and pronouns that, while they may arguably represent the generic man, their use can nonetheless be misleading for those who are not familiar with the culture in which they are written. When Chi is referred to as the "divine particle in man" (Ilogu 1974: 45) or the "inner man" (Idowu 1976: 87), even if this is not the intention of the authors, who are bound by the absence of gender neutral pronouns in the English language, it is likely that maleness will be connoted. The Igbo believe that every person has a chi



essence that allows them to communicate with the Ultimate Spirit. In this way, Chi unites all people in a single spiritual field while simultaneously equalizing them via a shared connection to the Ultimate Spiritual Essence. The term chi refers to the guiding essence, spirit, and energy of the universe, as well as the vector of providence. According to Ikenga-Metuh,

Okonkwo dedicates himself to becoming as macho as possible, and the work tackles the concept of masculinity via his climb to become a strong man in his community and eventual fall, both within the tribe and in the eyes of his son Nwoye. Okonkwo is a firm believer in traditional gender roles, and he is disappointed that his son Nwoye does not display the same level of aggression as he does. The fact that he wishes his daughter Ezinma were a male, as a consequence, is illuminating; we can see just how fond he is of her from his expression of this desire. A further example is when Okonkwo criticizes a man without a title by calling him a woman at a meeting towards the beginning of the novel, showing how highly masculinity is prized in Umuofia culture when ranking individuals inside it. The eventual result of Okonkwo's devotion to masculinity and aggressiveness is that he becomes brittle and unable of adapting to the changes that are taking place in his tribe; he therefore falls from grace. According to this ideal of masculinity, Okonkwo compels himself to kill his own surrogate kid, murder the white guy against his better judgment, and hang himself before anyone else can inflict retribution on him. When it comes down to it, Okonkwo's aggressiveness ultimately renders him weak because it leaves him with little space to maneuver against the more subtle techniques of the white man. Nwoye struggles with the concept of masculinity since he wants to please his father by being tough and traditional, but he is finally repulsed by the brutality in Umuofia ceremonies and decides to join the Christians in order to escape. It is also possible to connect Nwoye's departure with the following

statement made by Okonkwo's uncle, Uchendu, after the family is expelled from Umuofia: "It is true that a kid belongs to its father. It finds compassion in its mother's house when a father hits his infant, on the other hand." Similar to Nwoye, after being beaten by his father, he seeks refuge in the more feminine and mild Christian faith, which seems to be more compassionate.

#### 4- Conclusion

**The research paper** aims at exploring the portrait of the image of male character in Achebe's Novels specially "*Things Fall Apart*", it aims also at providing the readers with insights in African Literature written by Achebe, and to find out the extent to which African culture influences Achebe's characters. The researcher followed the analytical, critical method in explaining these images and use these characteristic, features in order to explore how Achebe's works dealt with them. The study comes up with many results such as:

- 1- The usage of elements of nature and fables in the most significant characteristic of African literature Achebe utilized.
- 2- The utilization of proverbs or sayings in fiction is another characteristic that Achebe employed. These proverbs affected the rich inheriting of African literature. They also conversation which dominates all Achebe novels, particularly, Thing Fall Apart which contains fifteen proverbs.
- 3- Proverbs, myths, folktales, poems, songs and local linguist items which the main features of African Literature, are involved in Achebs' novels.
- 4- Politics and the white man culture have a great impact on Achebe Novels.
- 5- A chebe's writings, provide the readers with deep insight into African culture, that is why he is consolidated the ' father of African Literature"

- 6- Achebe's successful depicts the Africa societies before and after colonization.
- 7- African express these feelings such as hopelessness, sadness, lying, depression and pride through songs, so, Achebe implies fifteen songs in " Things Fall Apart'
- 8- Folktales are of great significance in Africans life and literature they teach, clarify, give example to people as general and children in particular way, so, the novelist implies nine folktales in things Fall Apart
- 9- Inclusion of Igbo words in Acheb's novels gives them African spirit and identify. One of the characteristics of African cultures the usage of local words. Local words in " *Things Fall Apart*"

### **Recommendations:**

- 1- The acquaintance of African readership with the characteristics of African Literature is very necessary and should be taken in account.
- 2- Students should be encountered by their teachers in schools and universities and researcher into African literature.
- 3- All Achebe's novels should teach to EFL learners in faculties of Arts and Education.

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