CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND SYMBOLISM IN TWO SELECTED DRAMA WORKS

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Abstract
A dramatic text is created with a lot of inherent parts such as character and characterization, plot and its elements, idea and language in all ramifications. In all these parts, action performed by character is a crucial aspect because it helps to further the plot, to express idea and contribute to spectacle, giving deeper meaning to the actions performed by the individual and group characters. Each characterization symbolizes something. Some people find it difficult to understand actions performed by characters in drama and what their actions symbolize. Again, it is not easy for people to understand why characters either individually or in group behave the way they behave or take actions they take thereby judging them without understanding them. Appropriate character is created by a playwright in his work according to the dimensions the play revolves, like physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions. This work therefore, delves into the process of character development and symbolism in two drama works from individual and group perspectives. Data for the study are gotten from two plays: *Nke M Ji Ka (NMJK)* by female playwright, Gabreila Nwaozuzu; and *Eriri mara ngwugwu (EMN)* by Goddy Onyekaonw, male playwright. Survey method is used and the theory for analysis of data is Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis Theory It is observed that both male and female characters can either be realist, idealist or centrist characters. It is also observed that both characters can suffer loss of self-esteem psychologically and these can happen to individual or group'
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Introduction
Characters are persons represented in literary works. A character may be represented as a protagonist, antagonist, dynamic, static, round, flat, or stock and can either be main character or minor character. A character can fit into more than one category and can change from one category to another throughout the course of a literary work. Extending the plot is character's main purpose in literature. Multiple types of characters are employed in many stories and dramatic performances. There must be main character in every story and he/she is the character that has the greatest effect on the plot or the most affected by the actions in the story. Therefore these characters are known through their actions in drama

In a literary work, when the author uses details to discuss a person participating in the work, that is characterization. Characterization is used to bring characters to life and is an essential part of a narrative and dramatic work. It is a way of unfolding gently a man's brilliant mind or a woman's confidence. Characterization is a means a literary writer ex-rays the personality of a character. He does this through direct or explicit characterization and or indirect characterization. Direct characterization mostly seen in narrative works involves, letting the audience have the knowledge of what the personality of the character is openly or unequivocally. It describes or comments on the character's passions and pursuits, his physical attributes or line of work, and his temperament (Pringle, 1987). For instance, looking at physical attribute, we are made to understand that Cyrano de Bergerac was self conscious of his nose. The writer is here informing the audience directly that the man Cyrano de Bergerac has nose that is not as normal as other peoples' noses. Looking at the method of communicating through direct characterization, we deduct that it is done through verbal method. In indirect characterization shown particularly in dramatic works, the method here invites the readers to infer qualities from characters' appearance, dialogue or actions. The writer exhibits things that expose the character's personality through may be verbal or non-verbal means.

They include these five methods: speech, thought, effects on others toward the character, actions and looks. As regards speech, it entails what the character says and how he speaks; for thoughts, what is divulged through the private thoughts and feelings of the character is involved; for effect on others toward the character, it reveals through the character his effect on others involving how other people feel or behave in reaction to the character; actions showcase what the character does, that is, how he acts; while looks entail what the character looks like which is exposed through his dressing, gait, movement etc. (Gerke, 2010: 64)

Studying characterization is necessary because it is what makes a story compelling. For works to be interesting and touch the reader's feelings, characters are supposed to look real. "Well constructed characterization gives the readers a strong sense of the personalities and complexities of the characters, making the characters believable, vivid and alive" (McGovern, 2004: 57). He goes on to assert that characterization is a very important aspect of a literary work because it makes the reader to more fully understand the motivations of characters. Harrison (1998, 33), said that effective characterization works in harmony with plot and setting, connecting the readers more intimately to a text. He states that to picture character's appearance, know their primary goals, drives and motivations, effective characterization is of utmost importance adding that, it is through characterization that the authors develop their sense of responsibility for effective and full development of character. He also said that conflicts and tensions as well as different types of resolutions that are involved in a story are created by different types of characters.

Pringles (1998, 97) opines, "Characterization can be symbolic, that is, events and the characters that perform the events can be symbolic. Writers are allowed to convey ideas to their readers through symbolism instead of saying them outright". He further states that they use symbolism to proffer ideas to their readers in a poetic way thereby making their work more complex. Writers make use of symbolism to create an impact and this they accomplish by attaching extra meaning to actions, objects and or names. According to McGoven (2004), symbolism has five characteristics that can be found in literature. They include: concretizing the abstract, having multiple layers of meaning, are allusive, creating emotional response and are clues about what is important to the author.

Individual character is the aggregate of features and traits that form the nature of an individual, while the group character which involves more than one person and are dependent on one another with primary characteristics is the aggregate of features and traits that form the nature of the individuals in the group.

Review of Literature
Dramatic characters are inventions in a work of drama and they represent mostly human personality. Harrison (1998), defines character as the persons presented in the works of narrative or drama who convey their personal qualities to the audience through dialogue and actions by which the readers or audience understand their thoughts, feelings, intentions and motives. Characters may be presented by means of description through their actions, speech or thought (Aston, 1991). According to Kress (2005), characters in theatre, television, and film differ from those in novels in that actor may interpret the writer's description and dialogue in their unique way to add new layers and depth to a character. According to Danahy (2015), "Character can be defined as any person, animal, or figure represented in a literary work". Creating characters as practiced by actors or writers is called characterization and it is at times used synonymously as character development.

Characterization is the representation of persons (or other beings or creatures) in narrative and dramatic works (Wikipedia).It is a literary device that is used step-by-step in literature to highlight and explain the details about a character in a story or drama (Kress, 2005). According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, "Characterization is the act of characterizing; especially: the artistic representation; especially (as in fiction or drama) of human character or motives the author's characterization of the boy as someone who wanted to be accepted by others". "Characterization can also be seen as the representation of a character or

characters on the stage or in writing, especially by imitating or describing actions, gestures, or speeches" (Danahy, 2015: 38).

Characterization as a process of producing a character through typifying its actions, words and thoughts is very important in drama because it is the characters that through their action in dramatic performance intimate the audience of the happenings in the society. Looking at the behaviours of the characters, their psyches are involved. Characterization is seen in plays, novels, poems, TV shows, movies and any other format that require character creation and development and all these symbolize something.

Symbolism as a concept is not confined to works of literature alone. Symbols dwell in every nooks and crannies of our daily life. But for the purpose of this study, we will look at it from literary perspective. Symbolism is a style of writing whereby the author uses conventional or traditional signs in the representation of divine beings and spirits (Blackeley, 2015). Blackeley goes on to say that expressing the invisible or intangible by means of visible or sensuous representations or the art of using symbols particularly by investing things with a symbolic meaning is symbolism. Symbolism can also be taken to be a literary device which makes use of symbols in form of words, people, objects, locations, marks or abstract ideas to represent something beyond literal meaning (Aston, 1991: 59).

Symbolic representations of characters in a dramatic work under study are necessary because character's symbolization is an essential function of the human consciousness. Human behaviour depends upon the use of symbols and that is why Dillistone (1995) says that symbol is something that stands for something else. It can be a sound, gesture or written character that represents an object, action, event or idea. Generally, symbols have figurative meaning because they compare or merge two unlike things. Symbols are born in an encounter, given during inspiration and they interpret experience (Blackeley, 2015). They are created, given, grow and die amid changing circumstances. Taken from the realm of human experience, they relate man to that which is of ultimate concern.

Symbolism is a vehicle of revelation. It is the use of an object or an idea to represent another and it involves meaning which may be semiotic or symbolic. As Coyle (1990:127) observes, "Semiotic state is the pre-linguistic state of the subject where linguistic signs are lacking". When an author uses an object or reference to add deeper meaning to a story, it is symbolism. Symbolism in literature can be subtle or obvious and it is used sparingly or heavy handedly. It is the linguistic state that is after the mirror phases. "A mirror phase is the experience of castration in the Oedipus complex that the subject becomes capable of taking on the signs of a language. It is also the attempt to penetrate beyond the surface of reality…so as to create in the reader emotional experiences…(Coyle,1990:128). This corresponds to Freud's theory of Oedipus complex and Lacan's symbolic realm of distinction and differences between self and other. It is in the sense of the above view that we apply symbolism in this study. The term symbolism as it relates to the realist, the idealist and the centrist characters needs to be explained in relation to individual and group characters.

Individualism is one of the views of nature of humans and society. It is a personal lifestyle that advocates personal autonomy. It is also the habit and principle of being independent and self-reliant. Individualism can also be said to be the belief in the primary importance of the individual and in the virtues of self-reliance and personal independence (Knopf, 1972). Knopf (1972) notes that individualism can also be seen as a doctrine, which holds that the interest of the individual should take precedence over the interest of a group. As an ethical psychological concept, it holds that a human being should think and judge independently, ascertaining the sovereignty of his or her mind. In summary, it is concerned with the concept of autonomy, but as an ethical political concept, individualism upholds the supremacy of individual rights (Brendan, 1981). I view individualism as a concept which upholds that all values, rights and duties of an individual takes precedence over that of a group. According to Locke (1989), individualism speaks more forcefully of the need for freedom or liberty and the natural striving for the separations necessary to progress. It affirms

the strength of individuals and uniqueness of the human person. It prioritizes the wants, needs and rights of the individual against the collective good.

Collectivism is the practice or principle of giving a group priority over each individual in it. Itcan also be said to be the principle or system of ownership and control of the means of production and distribution by the people collectively, usually under the supervision of a government. Collectivism holds that the group is the primary unit of reality and the ultimate standard of value, but it does not deny the right of the individual. Ultimately, collectivism holds that one's identity is determined by the group one interacts with, that one's identity is constituted essentially in relation with others. Collectivism is also of the group and individual comfort should be sacrificed when the collective good so required (Fourier 1979 in Moemeka 1998: 125).

Theoretical Studies
In the study, the following assumptions are made: that characters exhibit tendencies that reflect humiliation, high handedness, fear and selfishness in our society. These characters in the texts under study portray individual and group felt dimensions of the above mentioned tendencies in their role and actions to actualize themselves. Therefore, to investigate these problems, psychic disposition of the characters in the plays is involved and as such, Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud (1855 – 1935) is necessary. Psychoanalysis is a major school of thought in psychology. Freud (1933) believed that the human mind is composed of three elements: 'the id', 'the ego', and 'the superego'. Each of these elements represents a different psychological mindset necessitating different reactions from different characters. It is one of the theoretical construct in terms of whose activity and interaction of mental life is described. According to this model of the psyche, the id is the set of uncoordinated instinctual trends more interested in immediate self gratification, not caring about the consequence; the superego plays the critical and moralizing roles interested in what is right and what is wrong) and the ego is the organized realistic part that mediates between the desire of the id and the superego. The superego can stop you from doing certain things which the id may want you to do. This theory involves the analysis of the mind of each character in relationship to the body. Freud's psychological study focuses on the mind and related psychological attributes making up the mind.

Edward (1988) believes that a character's psyche is composed of three principles- the id which represents the instinctual drives of an individual and remains largely unconscious, the super ego which represents a person's conscience and his internalization of societal norms and morality and, and the ego which is the conscious mind and serves to integrate the drive of the id with the prohibitions of the super ego. The psyche is the force in an individual that influences thought, behaviour and personality. Characters in works of drama portray features that cast them in the mould of an idealist, a realist or a centrist, and so, this calls for the consideration of character analysis under study from the individual and group dimensions.

A realist character is a character who thinks of himself only. He gives no thought to the consequences of his actions or inactions on others. He exhibits self love but stifles such on others. An idealist character is a character whose ides or actions tend to mean well for the generality or individual members of the society. The centrist character mediates between the realist and idealist characters. He blows hot and cold. He most often plays roles which assist in striking a balance between oppositions (realist and idealist). He is kind of alter-ego. The role characters play revolve around motive force of the super-ego in Freudian psychology called morality principles (Ikeokwu, 2008). From my own perspective, characterization is the way a writer paints the picture of the characters in his work through the acting skills of the characters.

Individual Characterization and their Symbolism

Attitude towards Lack of a Male Child
Individual characterization is the way of behaviour of an individual. Here, the action of the individual character is consequent upon another individual character or upon one's self. That is the rationale behind the popular saying or principle that where one's freedom ends is where another person's starts. In other words, one's right should not infringe on another's.

In all the cultures of the world, there are approved ways of behaviour for both the males and the females. Certain characteristics, duties and activities are considered appropriate. Human beings exhibit negative characteristics like hatred, wickedness, aggressiveness, viciousness, promiscuousness, selfishness, stinginess, sluggishness, timidity, stupidity, vindictiveness and others as well as positive characteristics like love, compatibility, admiration, adaptability, intelligence, dependability, wisdom, trustworthiness, thoughtfulness, open-mindedness, etc. These characteristics are there in the characters involved in the texts under study and they distinguish one individual from the other. In these plays, there exist the three character dimensions- the realist, the idealist and the centrist.

One of the realities of man's situation in African culture that brings out the best or worst character in a man or woman is the issue of procreation. This is exemplified in some of the texts Igbo man will go to any length to have a child. He may marry another wife if his wife cannot have a child at all. Where she begets only female children, the husband may marry another woman or, he does not give out one of his daughters, especially the first one in marriage, but instead allows her to bear him male children to continue the lineage. A family that has only female children entertains the fear of going into extinction. Such situation creates problems and tension for the married couple.

For instance, in *NMJK,* Eze Onyekwere is not happy with Ugochi, his wife for giving him only female children and he married Achalu (27), his second wife to bear him a male child because, he is afraid that his lineage will go into extinction. The lack here symbolizes lineage extinction and his character is that of an idealist for he cares not what his action will do to Ugochi, his first wife. Eze Onyekwere's behaviour corresponds with his name' Onyekwere' which means 'Nobody agrees (that his lineage will go into extinction)'. The tendency of lack of children or lack of male child creates avenue for having the antagonist and the protagonist characters.

Lineage continuity is highly valued in Igbo land. That is why you have such Igbo names like *Obiechina*' Let my lineage not go into extinction', *Ahamefula* 'May my name not go extinct', being given to male children, symbolizing the necessity of lineage continuity. In contrast, female children are seen as symbolizing other people's lineage continuity - *ama ndi qzq* – because they will be married off. Quest for a male child can make a woman or man do anything to have a male child. In *NMJK,* Ugochi disobeys Eze Onyekwere, her husband and the chief custodian of the tradition of Umueleme community being the king as she joins the white man's religion. Ugochi does this in her quest to get a male child which will change the battered emotion or psychology of Eze Onyekwere, her husband. The action of Ugochi, according to the tradition of Umueleme, is an abomination (17).The action portrays Ugochi as an idealist character because she has the interest of her husband and family at heart. Ugochi's actions correspond with her name meaning God's eagle and eagle is a revered bird, held in high regards as a male child is held in high regard. Her character signifies her hope that God will give her a male child because God values her as an eagle. She hopes that by insisting on attending the whiteman's church (17) that God will give her a male child and He did (61)

In the text *EMN,* there is a lack of male children. Ochonganooko threatens to take another wife due to lack of a male child in his marriage with Uduaku. To forestall this, Uduaku, his wife involves herself in child

swapping of the female child she gives birth to with a male child given birth by another woman at the hospital where they give birth to their babies. Eventually, this secret is revealed that Uduaku and Ochonganooko's supposed son is not theirs and Ochonganooko , her husband feels cheated. Ochonganooko plans and travels with Uduaku his wife by deceiving her that they are going to look for a solution for lack of a male child. He sells her off there to ritual killers to kill her as punishment for deceiving him. His plan failed because Uduaku came back debunking the lie Ochonganooko told his kinsmen that Uduaku his wife drowned in the river when they travelled and that is why she did not return with him. She is a realist character because, she cares not about the consequences of her action of swapping her female child with Mrs. Okwuolisa's male child on Ochonganooko, her husband and on Okwuolisa's family or the nurse who aided her in the act due to money given to her by Uduaku. Her action of swapping her female child with Mrs. Okwuolisa's male child symbolizes lineage continuity. She did what she did because she doesn't want her husband's lineage to go into extinction. Uduaku initially abandons Ndubuisi, her first husband leaving him stranded on altar on their wedding day and running off with Ochonganooko who promised her taking her overseas which he did. Uduaku means populrity of money and her character is that of a realist because she does not care about the consequences of her actions on others. 'Ochonganooko' means 'one who always looks for trouble'. He is a realist character for he takes whatever action he wants to take without considering the feelings of the recipients of his actions.

Identity Seeking – Loss of Self Esteem
Identity seeking is a process whereby a person seeks to know about his current self in order to figure out where he is in his pursuit of an identity and how to get from where he is to where he wants to be. A person's identity could be seen from either positive or negative perspective. If seen positively, it means his identity is in high esteem; but if seen negatively, his identity is in low esteem. Self-esteem is a person's overall opinion of himself and this is shaped by his thoughts, relationships and experiences. Low self-esteem is when a person puts little value in his opinions and ideas and it affects him psychologically. Such situations abound in texts under study.

There is psychological loss of selves in *NMJK*. Ugochi, Achalu's co-wife is receives insults from Achalu like saying to her…*isi nwaany[yiri ohu "*head wife who is like a slave" (53) because Ugochi has no stake in their house because she has no male child. Ugochi psychological impotency manifests itself in her inability to fight back because the gift of male children is from God and she cannot fight God. Achalu, Ugochi's co-wife is sent home by Eze Onyekwere, their husband because she gives birth to a baby girl and she could do nothing to save herself to guarantee her continued stay in her husband's house (76). Eze Onyekwere's inability to fight back when the white men flogged and detained him for maltreating Ugochi, his wife shows psychological loss of manhood.

Also in *EMN,* Ndubuisi suffers loss of manhood as Ochonganooko takes away Uduaku, his wife and he cannot do anything (38-39). Ochonganooko also loses his manhood psychologically because he loses his supposed son to the family of Okwuolisa and he cannot do anything to reclaim him. Uduaku suffers psychological loss of womanhood as she could not do anything to save herself from the consequences of her action when the secret of their child swapping is revealed.

Group Characterization and their Symbolism
Under this sub chapter, we discuss collective consciousness and consequences of characters' actions in the selected plays of study. Group characterization and symbolism deal with the conflict between the individual and a group of people in the society. They involve how the behaviour of an individual affects a group of people in the society or how the behaviour of a group of people in the society affects the individual.

In the African society, Igbo particularly from where the plays under study are taken, individuals owe their interests and loyalties to the society that rears them while the society that brings them up imbibe these moral

values, moral codes and mores that help in moulding the behaviour(s) of the individual in the society. It is a system of life in the African society where the lives of individuals are profoundly interpenetrated by others with mutual influences and corresponding rights and obligations (Bookchin, 2006:118). But the individual may be selfish, egocentric, prejudicial and insensitive, imposing his wish on the society, as we see some instances in the plays of study. The society may not condone these excesses from the individual and so deals with the individual. The consequences may result in such Igbo saying as *otu onye siere qha,qha erichaa ma qha siere otu onye, q gagh[erichanwu.* 'If an individual cooks for the society, the society will eat up but, if the society cooks for an individual, he cannot eat up'. So, the Igbo society operates the principle of corporate existence that is, doing things together. No one individual thinks and acts as if he is an island. If he dares, he is called to order by the society, or he is abandoned to his fate if his action has dire personal consequences.

Collective Consciousness
Collective consciousness is a set of shared beliefs, ideas and moral attitudes which operate as a unifying force within the society. The action of the society encourages individuals with differing views to conform to the beliefs of the overall group. So, the action of the people of Umueleme in *NMJK* against Ugochi, which is ostracizing her, to make her conform to their belief, portray them as realist characters because they want to protect their culture as well as themselves against the wrath of the gods of the land. They care less about the consequences of their action on Ugochi. Their action symbolizes culture preservation and unity. The conflict is between the group and Ugochi (individual); this shows collective consciousness. Again, Ugochi is a character cast in idealist mould. She suffers untold hardship and humiliation in the hands of her husband and his family. She also offers sacrifices to the gods to appease them for whatever reason in order for them to give her a male child to sustain her husband's lineage and to retain kingship in their family (61-67). This conflict is between Ugochi and her husband with his family because she refuses to stop attending the white man's church as well as refuses to be cleansed by the chief priest as planned by the husband for committing the abomination of giving birth to twins. The cleansing exercise is in accordance with the culture and tradition of the land. The character of the group is that of the idealist and shows collective consciousness.

Also, in *NMJK,* Eze Onyekwere is humiliated by his kinsmen and subjects. This is because he embraces Christianity while in prison. They feel that he has disappointed them because he as their king is the chief custodian of their culture and tradition as well as religion; but he leaves and joins the white man's religion. The conflict is between Eze Onyekwere and his people. The action of the people of Umueleme against Eze Onyekwere is collective consciousness. Their character is that of realist. They do not care about how Eze Onyekwere will feel. They are out to save their culture and tradition. Their group's action symbolizes unity and culture preservation.

Consequences
Conflicts involving individuals and groups abound in the plays under study and they have their consequences. For instance when Ugochi joins the Christians in *NMJK,* she is ostracized by the society and that is the consequence of her action (20-23). Eze Onyekwere's imprisonment for sending his men to burn down the white man's church is the consequence of his action (80). The consequence of the white men's interference with the culture and tradition of Umueleme people, which is, rescuing Ugochi's twins from the evil forest they are thrown into, is burning down of their church building as punishment (77).

Uduaku in *EMN* received her punishment for child swapping from two people. One punishment is from the nurse who exposed their deal of swapping Uduaku's female child with Mrs. Okwuolisa's male child. The other punishment is from Ochonganooko, her husband, who sold her off for deceiving him into thinking that he has a male child. Ochonganooko received his own punishment from the gods for not only selling Uduaku, his wife, but also for snatching her from Ndubuisi, her first husband on their wedding day, eloping

with her and leaving Ndubuisi stranded at the altar. He is also punished for committing the sin of incest by having canal knowledge of his daughter.

Summary and Conclusion
It is clearly portrayed in this work that any action performed by characters in dramatic work symbolizes something. These actions may be performed individually or in group but whichever way, the action symbolizes something. Characterization and symbolism play very crucial role in furthering the plot of the play, in expressing ideas in the play and contributing to the spectacle giving deeper meaning to the actions performed by characters in the play. It is also observed that appropriate characters are created in the play by playwright according to the dimensions the play revolves, like physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions. The work also clearly shows that both male and female characters can either be realist, idealist or centrist characters. It is also noted that both characters can suffer loss of self-esteem psychologically and these can happen to individual or group. The study also portrays the fact that conflicts involving individuals and groups have dire consequences.

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