

## INTERROGATING MIGRATION PROBLEMS IN NIGERIA. A STUDY OF NDUBISI GEORGE'S *WOES OF IKENGA*

**Udeh, Bryan Jachukwuike**

Department of English  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University  
bryanudeh9@gmail.com

&

**Obi Gladys Nwakaego**

Department of English  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University

### **Abstract**

Literature as a field of study have always been presented by literary scholars as a means to redirect, re-examine, and re-address predominant societal problems in Nigeria. This research presents migration as a primary concern in Nigeria. Migration is caused by so many factors ranging from search for identity, search for greener pasture, environmental conditions, educational opportunities, conflicts, social and political instability. Migration as a literary context can be referred to as the movement of a large number of people from one continent to the other. The problem of migration has been a long engaging aspect of African literature, as a result of this, studying the issues associated with migration in literature enhances the understanding of the experiences encountered by people found in this situation. These factors form the psyche of the migrating character. Over the years, Nigerian writers have viewed migration, its challenges and effects on the average Nigerian individual from a problematic perspective. Writers in Nigeria see the concept of migration as a muster point where they all gather to discuss migration as a predominant problem in the Nigeria. This research further re- addresses and interrogates the profound effects of migration on both origin and destination regions, influencing labor markets, cultural landscapes and workforce. The theoretical framework of this research is Realism. Realism is a theory and critical school of thought that has its main concern geared towards critically examining literary works that reflect the actual conditions of people and the society. The researcher re-addresses, and re-examines migration as predominant problem in Nigeria thereby providing a foundational overview, deep analyses of the effects of migration on the Nigerian individual. The methodology adopted in this research is a qualitative methodology. Ndubisi George's *Woes of Ikenga* is the chosen work under study.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Nigeria, Migration, Nigerian writer.

### **Introduction**

Migration may be seen as the process of moving from one country, region, or place of residence to settle in another. The duration of this new settlement may vary, but for the purpose of this research, the focus is on individuals who relocate either temporarily or permanently to another country. Human migration is the movement of people from one place to another with intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily, at a new location (geographic region). The movement often occurs over long distances and from one country to another, but internal migration (within a single country) is also possible; indeed, this is the dominant form of human migration globally. Migration is often associated with better human capital at both individual and household level, and with better access to migration networks, facilitating a possible second move. Age is also important for both work and non-work migration. People may migrate as individuals, in family units or in large groups. As such, migrants are traditionally described as persons who change the country of their residence for general reasons and purposes. These purposes may include the search for better job opportunities or healthcare needs. This term is the most generally defined one as anyone changing their geographic location permanently can be considered a migrant.

Migration can be voluntary or forced. Voluntary migration is based on the initiative and the free will of the person and is influenced by a combination of factors: economic, political and social: either in the migrants' country of origin (determinant factors or "push factors") or in the country of destination (attraction factors or "pull factors"). "Push-pull factors" are the reasons that push or attract people to a particular place. "Push" factors are the negative aspects of the country of origin, often decisive in people's choice to emigrate. The "pull" factors are the positive aspects of a different country that encourages people to emigrate to seek a better life. Although the push-pull factors are opposed, both are sides of the same coin, being equally important. Although specific to forced migration, any other harmful factor can be considered a "push factor" or determinant/trigger factor, such examples being: poor quality of life, lack of jobs, excessive pollution, hunger, drought or natural disasters. Such conditions represent decisive reasons for voluntary migration, the population preferring to migrate in order to prevent financially unfavorable situations or even emotional and physical suffering. Forced migrations usually involve

people who have been expelled by governments during war or other political upheavals or who have been forcibly transported as slaves or prisoners. Several Africans believe the myth that the West (Europe and America) is a wonderland and according to Onukaogu and Onyerionwu, be it, "in terms of near parasitic environmental sophistication, curious behavioral traits, strange cultural ethos" (249).

According to Terry Eagleton, most times as humans, "we are prepared to put up with repression as long as we see that there is something in it for us; if too much is demanded of us, however, we are likely to fall sick" (132). This form of disease is known as neurosis. Neurosis as a class of functional mental disorders involves distress but neither delusions nor hallucinations. This kind of neurosis has to do with the causes of our unhappiness, even if we direct them towards a more socially valued end like migrating for greener pastures or better lives. To Eagleton, "the aim of psychoanalysis is to uncover the hidden causes of the neurosis in order to relieve the patient of his or her conflicts, by dissolving the distressing symptoms" (138).

The most common problems treatable with psychoanalysis include: obsessions, depressions, anxiety and general trauma in the sense in which it has been analyzed in this study. In this research, migrants are revealed as they verbalize their fantasies and dreams of migrating to the West which they believe holds the chance of better lives. These unconscious dreams eventually materialize but become illusions because they undergo traumatic migrant experiences in their quest for better lives on getting to these alien countries.

### **Aspects of Migration in George Ndubuisi's *Woes of Ikenga*.**

George Ndubuisi's *Woes of Ikenga* is a sordid and profound insight into the ordeals and inhumane experiences often undergone by young African men and women who erroneously perceive Europe and other Western countries as the destination and the "promised land." The novel, reveals in details, the realistic unfortunate situations that African youths go through on the exodus of leaving their homeland in search of greener pastures. Migration is a deadly and dangerous process, and those who successfully become survivors are faced with terrible diasporic trauma and experiences. Therefore, this research seeks to study some causes of these migrations and the experiences that these migrants encounter.

It is pertinent to state here that no one would wake up one morning and decide to migrate as Issac Newton rightly posits in his third law of motion that for every action, there is equal and opposite reaction. *Ikenga*, the character whom the story is laced around begins to nurse the thoughts of migrating abroad when his mother died in Umuafor. He, being a twin escaped death by Reverend Klaus's religious intervention hence his birth is welcomed by the community but *Ikenga* and his twin sister, *Chinaza* faces incessant maltreatment from their wicked stepmother. This is captured thus:

Loosing their mother was a double blow to the twins. Not only did they have to put up with hunger at a very early age, everything *Ikenga* did was wrong in the sight of his wicked stepmother. Indeed, a slave boy is blamed no matter what he does; if he does not wash his hands, he will be accused of being dirty and if he washes his hands, he will be accused of wasting water. (32).

Life was tough for *Ikenga* throughout his childhood. This reflects the reality in some Nigerian families where a man married two wives and loses one to death. The children of the dead wife often face maltreatment from their wicked stepmothers. She rarely would feed them, clothe them and care for them. Their stepmother only caters for her own children and allows the motherless children to die of hunger. Living in Umuafor, for *Ikenga*, seemed as living in frustration and abject poverty. The cruelty that his stepmother poured on him and his twin sister is so much that they do starve until *Nne*, the childless wife of *Chukwuma*, *Ikenga*'s father, returns from the market to feed them. At that moment, *Ikenga* begins to see the young men who travelled out of Umuafor as heroes. This is captured thus:

His struggles to survive turned him into an ambitious young boy and he soon began to view those who returned from Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea, and always carried their battery-powered radios permanently turned to the unending BBC news as heroes. Before long, he started to believe that their lives would suit his future. (33).

*Ikenga*'s notion of the returnees from outside Umuafor reflects the social reality of the situation in Africa and in Nigeria especially; young people often celebrate these returnees who travel outside Nigeria to other African countries as heroes and this makes their young minds believe that these returnees lie on green pastures and these young people see them as idols and models which is largely because of the hardship in Nigeria as a whole. In a country like Nigeria, the returnees are seen as the future of every young child in the village and this grows ambitions of migrating so as to become like them. This desire keeps burning in his heart. He finally gets to reveal it when he tells Reverend Klaus thus: "I would like to travel overseas one day." (43).

Another thing that causes Ikenga's migration ambition is his traditional destiny of becoming a priest in Ogwugwu shrine. This also taunts him and he has no interest in it. The chief priest who serves the famous Ibini Ukpiani is corrupt and he defrauds the people of the community and "Ikenga really had no interest in making a living from poor helpless folks" (p. 52), as captured by the narrator. He then decided to leave his homeland to be free from the humiliation meted on by his stepmother and from the corrupt chief priest and his shrine as he has seen that he would do no better than his ancestors. This reveals social realism in the light of some Nigerian traditional societies. Some children are born and are 'chosen' by their village heads as successors to a lineage of chief priests or mouthpieces of the gods. Such is the case of Ikenga even being born on the same day his grandfather, Udeaja died and the entire community assumes that the child has come to occupy his grandfather's traditional priesthood duties. Ikenga is faced with this and Chukwuma his father tells him that "any man who does not end up better than his ancestors is a disgrace to his generation". (52). In Nigeria, youths are not interested in anything ancestral line of traditional priesthood. In fact, they see those things as unacceptable childish and even degrading. They clamour to leave their towns and villages to travel out and make money for themselves and their families. Ikenga leaves to Port Harcourt to work with a foreign fishing company. On his quest to make lots of money for himself in Port Harcourt so that he could abandon his ambition to travel out to the white man's land, he conceives to steal idols from Ogwugwu Shrine to sell to white merchants in Port Harcourt. He succeeds in stealing the idols but his plan to sell them does not come to fruition as he is waylaid by armed robbers while on board to Port Harcourt. This uncovers his sins and he runs away so as not to be identified as the owner of idols. This frustrates his effort of making money while in Port Harcourt and this is captured thus:

When the attempts to raise money with the cherished treasures of his ancestors failed, Ikenga resumed contemplating abandoning his fatherland for the white man's land where he was beginning to believe his destiny lay. (72).

This mirrors the reality of the situation that some young men and women in Nigeria or Africa in general, are into. They make all efforts to make it big in their countries. They hustle just like Ikenga; doing all manner of stuff to secure a comfortable future but all their attempts prove futile. One can see the scarcity of job opportunities which makes these young people do what they do. At the end, these hustlers get hustled just like Ikenga is robbed on board which is also a reflection of the security situation in the country. Therefore, this particular incident adds more zeal in him towards migration.

In the novel, we see Stella, a young girl, whose migration ambition began when her father the sole breadwinner of the family, was buried alive in a coal-mining accident. Things become so difficult for her, her mother and her siblings. She gets pregnant along the line and quits her education and their financial situation worsened. This was when she "... agreed with her mother few months after delivery that only way their family could ever lead a better life was if she toed the path of her mates." ( 76). This reflects the reality exuding from the society where we see young girls who are orphans or have little or no hope of survival go into prostitution to make ends meet. They get pregnant along the line and stops everything about education. It is a full glare of reality that the only thing they dream about is putting to birth, leaving the child with their mothers and migrating abroad to 'hustle' for themselves and their families as was the case of Stella. Probably, the man who is responsible for the pregnancy has denied ever seeing her or the man runs into hiding causing the girl to find her destiny in a faraway land.

Again, one of these migrants is Raymond Ogonnia; a promising and ambitious young man who completed his college studies in Umuafor. He later spends some years in a nursing school in a distant town and later decides to go abroad to study Medicine as there are no jobs in Umuafor. He tells his pregnant wife; "...by the time I come back as a qualified medical doctor..." (p. 128). This, in no small way portrays that this ambitious young man decides to migrate to become a better version of himself; to crown up all his studies with the title "Doctor". Hence he migrates. Here, we see realism accentuates unequivocally reflecting the present state of Nigeria; this is the case of unemployment. Umuafor, symbolically, mirrors Nigeria as a place where many finish their university education with fat certificates and still roam the streets in search of jobs. When some ambitious young men and women stay helpless for a while, they toe the path of Ogonnia and migrate for greener pastures.

Haven looked at some causes of migration or reasons people migrate according to the text under study, the researcher will attempt an expose on diasporic experiences of these migrants according to the text. Ikenga sees that the only hope he has for freedom from the chains of poverty is to migrate. "Without any money raised: His only option then was to join the mini-stampede of the young generation to escape the shores of Africa through its vast borders." (p. 72). This reflects realism because lots of young desperados who venture into illegal migration take unimaginable risks by travelling through deadly and dangerous rivers, seas, oceans and deserts to get to their dream countries. In the process, many perish on high seas and deserts and their bodies nibbled clean by vultures, fishes and other wild animals. The novelist rightly writes in realism when he says:

They are now in the middle of nowhere, and the dusty desert like the surface of the moon stretched as far as the eyes could see with no other sign of life. As the darkness gradually began to disperse, Ikenga sighted people's belongings and scattered bones, and wondered what had happened to their owners. (83).

This is a real picture of the migration experience. Not everyone survives and arrives at the dreamland. In reality, some of the persons who engage in these illegal migration die in the deserts and their relatives never know what happened to their loved ones. This is how the young generation perish in the Sahara desert.

Ikenga continues his journey with the hope that he would suit be approaching Italy when he experienced a terrific and horrible diasporic trauma. This is captured thus:

He and some other group of desperate travellers had barely been huddled aboard and ill equipped half-metal-half-wooden boat ready to dare the mighty strength of the Mediterranean Sea when armed men claiming to be royal coast guards stormed, dragging him and his co-migrants down after a merciless beating. (85).

This mirrors in reality, the persecution that the migrants go through in diaspora. When it seems like they are crossing over a city, an unforeseen circumstance shows up which manhandles then mercilessly that hope is dashed to the mud. In this kind of journey, one does not hope to arrive, rather arrival is certain when one arrives. Until one arrives, one hasn't arrived. One fellow expresses his hope for arrival and whom Ikenga says, "I was at this juncture some months ago, already dreaming of Italy before some men came aboard and dragged us off the boat with merciless beating." (92).

So, being hopeful is in itself threatening. This is a reflection of realism as these illegal migrants are forced to throw their hopes away. They are not there until they are there. They are forced by the situation to hold their hearts in their palms, never to say it is over until it is.

Ikenga almost loses his life in the stormy waters off the coast of Lampedusa. This agrees to the reality of the near death experiences that the migrants encounter. This is captured when he says ... "Death, you are not for me!" (97). On his migration escapade, Ikenga nearly meets death face-to-face. Arriving is at the 'promised land' is not the end. The struggle for survival begins. This is well articulated when Mascot, Ikenga's friend says:

I have to tell you these things from day one... In a jungle where only tigers survive, you have to fight every inch of your way for survival. Life abroad is not a bed of roses, but on the contrary, a battle and survival of the smartest. The goal is to achieve a good life, and of course the Resident Permit for easy travelling. For the hard currency, you collect from the train station, our corporate headquarters but for the kpalli, the permission to stay or work, you collect that from girls since the jungle law leaves one with no alternative. (114).

This mirrors realism in a superlative degree. The very few survivors who get to the "promised land", discover to their chagrin and utmost disappointment that all that glitters is not good as they face stiff immigration laws and challenges with particular reference to the near impossibility of obtaining Permanent Resident Permit (PRP); a paper that guarantees the holders, the freedom and opportunity to move about, work and earn a living without tears, fears and public harassment. It is therefore understood in reality as Mascot points out that migrants have to survive by lying, stealing, drug trafficking and deceptively getting married to a lady.

On Ikenga's quest for his kpalli (Permanent Resident Permit), he meets an older lady who tells him that she loves him. Unknowingly to him, the lady usually takes advantage of the newbies in town to satisfy her sexual urge, promising them kpalli. The novelist unveils this as he captures this thus:

... because the old lady and many like her were well known for their insatiable desire for men with active magic sticks. They preyed mostly on newly arrived migrants with promises of marriage till they were through with their victims. (120).

In reality, it is obvious that these migrants are desperate and are ready to jump into anything to get what they want. It mirrors that there are some women abroad who know how desperate these young men are and they also see their gullibility and vulnerability hence the older women get them trapped in their own craftiness thereby having them satisfy their sexual urge.

Ikenga meeting Uncle Ray reflects realism as Uncle Ray stands for those men who African youths, especially Nigerians, wish to be like not knowing that they are having their own share of "foreign suffering" in their supposed white man's land as he points out that "life in a white man's land is a theatre understood only by the actors and not

the speculators." (p. 131). In Ikenga's quest for satisfaction in the white man's land, he goes to Uncle Ray for assylum. Uncle Ray tells him that getting an assylum requires being fake in everything. Ikenga comes to lying about everything in the interview at the Central refugee headquarters in Landesburg. He lies about his name being Hassan Ijenwanta - "My name is Hassan Ijenwanta." (p. 135). He lies about his identity but the interview gets sour as he is not believed. All the interviews he endeavors to get a UN passport are in futility. This reflects the reality of the young lads who change their names abroad to survive. They lie about not having a father and a mother while their parents are very much alive. They lie about having wars in their countries when there is none. This depicts realism.

Ikenga decides to work at a farm with the hope of getting the Resident Permit if he worked hard enough, but he still meets his Waterloo. This is mirrored thus: "... Little did he know that waking up at four every morning and crawling around the vast farmland from sunrise to sunset to prove hid capability was a criminal offence?" (145).

A very disheartening situation surfaces and Ikenga is symbolically seen in reality, as that breed of migrants who are lost in the crowd and are caught because of their inability to understand the language of their host countries. Mr. Meier, Ikenga's boss shouldn't have shouted "Da Lang!" (p.145); if he wanted to help Ikenga escape but he didn't because Ikenga is black. Here, the pains of migrants are revealed in realism. Working on a farm might seem noble to some of these migrants but little did they know that working as a farmer or as a cleaner can be a criminal offence when you don't have your Resident Permit. Hence, they are continuously faced with sorrow, thinking of the next to do to survive.

Out of frustration, Ikenga joins Mascot in the City Station, hustling to survive. It was there he also meet Vanessa, they both fall in love and she became pregnant for him. Luck walked out on them when Ikenga is caught and imprisoned for forty-two months for drug peddling. This reflects the social reality of some young African men who leave their homeland in pursuit of green pastures. So as not to become a failure to their families and kinsmen, they go into illegal businesses; pushing of hard drugs, stealing etc; just to make ends meet. Doing this to make ends, they meet their end. While their families in the village think they are out enjoying life, they are in prisons abroad. All these migrants yearn for is to show their success to their community as is the case of Ikenga when the novelist says: "Since he had not been sending money regularly, Umuafor would only reconcile with him if he returned with plenty." (188).

Ikenga gets another job in Okazi Foods & Services but he now sees that Vanessa lacks how to manage resources. This causes so many fracasas daily in their home. The novelist rightly captures this "Although she managed to play along despite her reservations, Ikenga grudgingly went to work just to house and feed someone he now saw as an adversary because she was opposed to all his principles. (191)."

There is a lining of realism here as one can relate it to a situation where a newly married couple is separated for a long time. Things will definitely fall apart and the center cannot hold anymore. They must be at loggerheads with each other. In reality, the lovers are no longer speaking the same language and both of them no longer agree on issues. For instance, Ikenga wants his son, Ahamefula to go to school but Vanessa sees no need for education. This situation opens us up to the reality that if Ikenga and Vanessa had been in a courtship relationship before they got married, Ikenga would have known Vanessa's view on education. The novelist says that "there had really been no time for courtship in his desperate search for a Resident Permit or Citizenship." (p.194). Even Vanessa detests that Ikenga is back from prison as she no longer gets her social welfare. Ikenga who sees marriage as a way of getting his Resident Permit or Citizenship now regrets marrying Vanessa. Vanessa tries to play along and Ikenga tries to close his eyes to the flouting of his principles. One can sense strife here! This supports the theoretical framework of this study, realism, as this is a trend now in most African countries especially in Nigeria. Out of desperation to amass wealth, young migrants get trapped in an unholy matrimony and some end up getting jailed at the end of it. To add, some Nigerian young men, in an attempt to travel outside the country, desperately search for nurses who intend to travel out. Love and compatibility are not in view here as this kind of union is a business marriage. They also get trapped in the long run in their quest for Resident Permit or Citizenship.

Ikenga is thrown out by his wife, Vanessa. His wife emptied what was left of their joint account before the hastily cooked marriage ended. This brings Ikenga a psychological damage and he is seen as a lunatic; eating animals like rats for food. This tells the extent of his mental and emotional breakdown and degeneration. Ikenga sees himself in Balthazar prison as Uncle Ray who is now a fake pastor, uses his mental condition to take him out for fear of being exposed by Ikenga as a fake pastor. Ikenga then realises that all his attempts for a better life have been useless and irrational. The author says:

It is hard to figure out the rationale behind a man abandoning his friends, relatives, and in some cases, wife and children, for an unknown world armed with only his faith and

determination to fight whatever obstacles that would come his way. Why would anyone risk his or her life and leaving everything he or she is accustomed to, for a dangerous trip across the dry deserts of North Africa and the treacherous waters of the Mediterranean with very little or insufficient means of passage? ( 305).

The reality here exudes here as Ikenga's journey lacks all human reasoning. This unveils the purposeless hunger that fuels young Africans, to migrate to escape poverty. They do not sit to count the cost. Little do they know that they have subscribed to years of sorrow and isolation?

This is supported thus: "Throughout his ambitious journey to the land of the unknown, Ikenga never expected to face any stumbling blocks when he got to the Promised Land." (p. 314).

Ikenga is finally deported to Nigeria, and back to Umuafor. He would tell his story to everyone that care to listen; "A travelled child knows better than the old man who sits at home ... I have not come back empty-handed ... I came back with my story." (330).

The fact remains that Ikenga is happy to be back to his family. He continually tells the story of the woes he encountered and a realization dawns on the people that all they travel to seek abroad can be in their homeland. This mirrors reality as Ikenga's story unveils the unfulfillment that awaits anyone who sees abroad as where his destiny lay. Just as Ikenga's chi says; ... "Your awele cannot be found in the white man's land." (313). Hence this presents the reality that the greener pastures, peace and, fulfillment that many leave Africa, and indeed, Nigeria, to seek can be found in their homelands.

## CONCLUSION

This research re- examines study of George Ndubuisi's *Woes of Ikenga*. This paper resolves that the novel dwell more on character than plot and also revolves on the common, the social and the contemporary issues in society which affirm its realist bearing.

In George Ndubuisi's *Woes of Ikenga*, apart from Ikenga's Woes, some characters who survived in the promised land are mentally, emotionally and psychologically degenerated or living a lie. One of such is the Law Professor who overstayed his welcome in Germany and went about speaking "grammar", as he lost his European wife and children. Professor Freeman, who suffered from dejection, depression, overstay and psychological derailment after being left one by one by all the women he married and his children. This culminated to what made him call himself Professor Freeman as all he wanted was to be a Freeman. Also Stella, who gains her Resident Permit but saw the man she married as too old and stingy and needed a future husband, has lost all her beauties in prostitution. All she has is her money and she hopes it would attract a younger man like Ikenga. Ikenga himself doesn't see anything left of Stella as Ikenga in his presumed insanity prefers to rather remain single for the rest of his life than marry a woman like Stella. Eze, who the novelist calls a vagabond, is not left out. He is taken by a farm owner and he sees Catherine, the farm owner's daughter as his Resident Permit. He impregnates her and at the verge of getting of his Resident Permit, he is arrested for working without a legal document and impregnating a minor. Uncle Ray who sees becoming a Pastor as a means of survival defrauds people of their hard earned money and he plans for Ikenga to stage a miracle for him but Ikenga declines which gets him to arrest though he bases the arrest on Ikenga's mental health. On Eze's release from prison, he confronts Pastor Ray of Ray Power Miracle Fountain Church having been sowing fruitless seeds to secure his Resident Permit from a woman who has a daughter for him. Instead of his kpalli, he is refused his entitlement. A fight is put up in church and Pastor Ray pays Eze one thousand eight hundred Deutsche Marks in return of all his sown seeds that didn't produce any fruits.

The migration and diasporic experiences of Ikenga in Ndubuisi's *Woes of Ikenga*, portrays the travails of young Nigerian and African men and women are suffering from social injustice, unemployment, inequality and prejudice that have made them vulnerable. Also, the concerns of the novels, which are the socio-economic and psychological challenges of the lower class young men and women in Nigeria, have brought to the fore the social reality of life of the lower class in Nigeria and immigrants in Europe. Therefore, well placed individuals, parents, civil society organizations and the government should make efforts to improve and secure the lives of young women in order to help them escape from their vulnerabilities.

### Works Cited

- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981.
- Achebe, Chinua. *Morning Yet on Creation Day*. Heinemann, 1981.
- Aristotle. *Poetics*. Penguin Books, 1996.
- Becker, G.J. *Realism in Modern Literature*. Frederick Ungar. 1980.
- Chukwuma, Helen. "The Novel and Social Criticism". *In Accent in the African Novel*. New Generation Books, 1991.
- Egudu, Romanus. *Modern African Poetry and African Predication*. Macmillan Press, 1979.
- ... *The Study of Poetry*. University Press Ltd., 1979.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
- Eze, C. *Feminism with a big "F": Ethics and the rebirth of African feminism in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street*. *Research in African Literatures*, 45 (4), pp.89-103, 2014.
- Habib, M A R. *Literary Criticism from Plato to the Present, an introduction*. Malden: Willey-Blackwell, 2011.
- Ibeku, I. A. *Sexuality and diasporic experiences in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street*. *Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University*, pp.1-16, 2013.
- Kamalu, I & Ejezie B. O. *Ideational representation of prostitution in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street*. *Department of English Studies, University of Port Harcourt*.pp.239-259, 2014.
- Maduakor, Obi. *Introduction to Poetry*. Nsukka: Fulladu Publishing Company, 1991.
- Ngugi, WaThiong'O. *Home Coming*. Heinemann, 1972
- ... *Writers in Politics*. Heinemann, 1991.
- Nwabueze, Emeka. *Studies in Dramatic Literature*. ABIC Books and Equip Ltd, 2011.
- ... *Research Methods: An Integrated Approach*. ABIC Books, 2013.
- Ndubuisi, George. *Woes of Ikenga*. Kraft Books Limited, 2014.
- Orabueze, F.O. *The law and slave trade: An evaluation of sex-slavery in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street*. *Nsukka Journal of Humanities*, 21, pp.47-72, 2013.
- Obi Gladys Nwakaego. *A search for Identity and personhood in VS Naipaul's A House for Biwas and Samuel Selvon's The Lonely Londoners*. *Coou Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Vol 5,3,2021.
- Palmer, Eustace. *An Introduction to the African Novel*. Heinemann, 1972.
- Rohmann, C. *A world of ideas: A dictionary of important theories, concepts, beliefs, and thinkers*. Ballantine Books.
- Udeh Bryan, J. *Migration and Diasporic experiences in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters Street*. *Nigerian Journal of Art and Humanities*. Vol 3,2023.
- Umezurike, U.P. *Sexuality and subjectivity in Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street*. *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities*.pp.1-25, 2013.
- Unigwe, C. *On Black Sisters' Street*. Vintage Books, 2010.