

**LITERATURE, CULTURE AND GENDER: A LOOK AT THE ROLE OF
GENDER IN HAUSA TRADITIONAL ORAL FOLKTALES**

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ABSTRACT

Literature is a reflection of the society that produces it. As a whole it consists of creative and purposeful sayings and writing of great value. This paper looks at the concepts of Hausa literature, gender and folktales. It further looks at some traditional Hausa folktales with a view to looking into the role of gender, which is the social and cultural interpretation of sex in terms of roles, duties and responsibilities in everyday life. Specifically, the paper lays emphasis on the position of the female gender culturally. The paper concludes by enumerating and emphasizing on the role and position of the female gender in the traditional Hausa society.

Keywords: Literature, Culture, Gender, Hausa Tradition.

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Introduction: The Hausa People

Hausa is a name of a people, language and tribe. They are predominantly found in the Northern parts of Nigeria, in States like Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, in northern parts of Kaduna State as well as some parts of Bauchi State. Hausa language is also found in some other countries like Niger Republic, Northern Ghana and in some communities from Kaolack in Senegal to Khartoum in the Sudan. (Furniss, 1996). The language belongs to the Chadic sub-family of the Afro-Asiatic languages (Greenberg, 1946:103). The Hausa people, being great traders, have traveled far and wide throughout Africa and beyond, as a result Hausa became a leading lingua-franca and one of the most widespread languages in Africa. Hausa is spoken by approximately 65 million people, not only in Nigeria but throughout sub-saharan Africa and beyond. It is today broadcasted internationally in Radio stations like the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C), the Voice of America (VOA), the Radio Deuchebelle (MunyarJamarjamus), The Radio France, and Radio Beijing China. Studies and researches in Hausa, are also carried out internationally in many re-known universities like in the U.K, U.S.A, Germany, e.t.c. Historically, the Hausas are said to be related to the Berbers of North Africa, who had penetrated into Hausaland after being displaced by the Arabs in the middle of the eleventh century (Murdock 1959:137). The Hausa people are predominantly farmers, and the Hausa land is very good and fertile land for farming during the raining season and the people are engaged in irrigation as they are blessed by rivers that flow almost throughout the year. The land is blessed with three seasons namely; the raining season, the harmattan season and the dry season. The Hausas, have good architectural designs and so built very strong houses known as "Soro" and they have other occupations like, blacksmiths, fishermen, Berbers, dyers, e.t.c. The men are predominantly polygamous in nature. The Hausas are before the coming of Islam and the Europeans are pagans known as "Maguzawa".

Hausa Literature

Literature in Hausa has been defined by many scholars. Each according to their views and understanding. One of the scholars is of the view that:

"Literature is a phenomenon which describes the features of a nation in order to point out it's art of word, it's culture and it's way of life" (Gusau, 1985).

While another scholar in his opinion and understanding defines literature as thus:-

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“Literature, which is “adabi” in Hausa has to do with culture and the way of life of people as well as it’s study. He further explained that, literature can be likened to mirror through which one can perceive a society, that it is a picture of what the society looks like in terms of its language, food, dress, houses, thoughts and ideas as well as the way they interact. Thus in Hausa, literature is perceived beyond something written to include everything concerning that particular society” (Dangambo, 1994).

Generally all these scholars are of the view that Hausa literature can be divided into two, the traditional Hausa literature which is oral and the modern Hausa literature which is written. The traditional literature is not written due to the absence of a writing system in those days. It is a literature that is a cultural heritage of the Hausa people for they inherited it from their great-great grandparents; it is created, transmitted and preserved orally. It consists of proverbs (Karin magana), riddles (Kacici-kacici), Fables (almara), Folk tales and stories (tatsuniya). It also consist of all the people’s cultural heritage, their mode of dressing, housing, occupation, food, religion e.t.c.

While the modern literature came into being as a result of their contact with the Arabs, they came along with the religion of Islam, and it’s writing system after the Arabs contact, the European came with the Roman script which the Hausas learn and with the contact with these two groups the Hausa literature expanded. It was later divided into three genres, namely, the prose (zube), the poetry (Rubutacciyarwaka) and the Drama which is known as (wasankwaikwayo).

FOLK TALES

A folk tales is a story or legend handed down from generation to generation, usually by oral re-telling. Folk tales often explain something that happens in nature or convey certain truth about life. The beginning of the story usually starts by “once upon a time”.

Folk talks include Fairy tales, trickster tales, myths, and legends. It explains something that occurs in nature conveying a certain truth about life, it is told to amaze and amuse listeners. Folk tales, originates from oral traditions, they passed from one person to another by word of mouth, they are not written but kept or preserved in the memory of mankind (Ask.com).

Hausa Traditional Oral Folktales

In a traditional Hausa society folk tales are stories told as oral narratives, usually they are orally created and documented. The stories are meant to teach the people especially the young ones, moral lessons of how and what to do or expect of life and also it is a form of entertainment and relaxation after long hours of working during the day time.

Folk-tales in Hausa are divided into two namely:-

1. Tatsuniya (which is the oral narrative in form of stories)

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2. Kacici-kacici (is a form of riddles and jokes where questions are asked and answered are given)

Folk-tales in Hausa is as old as time, the Hausa people have their folks, created and documented orally, "Tatsuniya" (folk-tale) in Hausa can be long or short. It is usually created with human characters, animals like the Hyena "Kura", the Hare "Zomo", the Monkey "Biri", the Lion "Zaki", the Elephant "Giwa", etc. the birds, the insects like the Spider "Gizo", the praying mantis "Koki", with in-animate characters known as "Dodo", "Botarami", "Malam Hanta bodo" are created like the English 'orge" or "the goblin". So also are characters built of witches, in Hausa they are known as "maye" or "mayya" or spirits known as "aljani" or "aljana". In Hausa tales, the characters of "gizo" the spider always represent wiser or clever character, while the Hyena "Kura" represents foolish and greedy characters, the "Dodo", "Maye" or "aljani" normally represents wicked or frightening characters. The theme of these stories normally contains moral lessons which the listeners are expected to emulate or are normally cautioned not to copy.

The tales are normally told at the night after the day's hard work. Children normally gather at the house of the grand mothers, newly wed bride or sometimes at the village playing ground known as "dandali" to listen or narrate stories to each other. Most often it is the grand mothers that call their grand-children or the children of their neighbours to come and listen to tales. During these time the children usually help the old women with some little task, like the peeling of the groundnut, the removal of the cotton seedlings from the cotton, the art of learning how to make thread from the cotton or even learning how to make local bamboo mats called "Tabarma" or dish covers known as "Faifai" or the local fan known as "Mafifici". At the house of the newly weds, the brides invites children to come and keep her company, instead of waiting long hours for her groom to come back from the "Dandali", where he has gone to relax with his friends, and also so that she doesn't engage herself in thinking too much and having nostalgic thoughts about her family, whom she left not quite long. So she invites the children and they try to narrate to each other very interesting stories.

Folk-tales in Hausa are characterized by certain traditions and customs. The narrator usually starts the story by saying "Gatanan, gatananku" (Here it is, or Here it comes), and the listeners will answer "Tazomujita" (meaning let it come). And at the end of the story, the narrator will say "Kurunguskankusu, badangizo da nan yikarya, gabera, gaberawandoyajitsoroalhaki a wuyansa" (meaning, the tale has come to an end, if not for the spider I would have told a lie, here is the rat, here is the rat, whoever is frightened is the liar). Traditionally or culturally the Hausa tales are normally told at night, but if for some reasons the tales are to be told at any other time apart from the night, certain traditions must be observed as follows:

1. The narrator and the listeners must each remove a hair from their eye brow, which will be thrown at the roof of the room they are going to tell the stories

or

2. Someone among them to take a black chalk, or charcoal to draw a line on the wall of room, they are going to tell the story in.

The reasons for all these is because if these customs are not observed both the narrator and the listeners will miss their way home or they will all become blind, so to avoid all these they have to perform this tradition.

Importance of Hausa Folk Tales to the Hausa People

In a traditional Hausa society these folk-tales are avenues or their first in-formal school or training grounds for their younger ones. In essence almost all the tales are stories containing various lessons and morals taught to these younger ones in a bid to make them emulate or to caution them on some bad or ugly unbecoming characters exhibited in the tales. Usually the grandmothers end the stories by counseling the children on the need to emulate the good characters or to desist from copying the bad habits or terrain exhibited by the characters in the tale.

As explained earlier the Hausa tales are normally instruments for training the younger ones learn certain arts and crafts from their elders. It is also a form of entertainment and relaxation, old customs and traditions are preserved for future generations.

GENDER

All ethnic groups have gender roles in relation to what male and female members of the society are expected to do. According to one scholar, Gender is perceived as follows:-

“Gender is the social and cultural interpretation of sex in terms of roles, duties and responsibilities in everyday life. Such roles include household chores, who does the cleaning, cooks the food, sweeps the compound, cleans the car where there is one and so on are all part of gender roles” (Alubo, 2012).

These gender roles begin early in life, during infancy as different sets of toys are provided for boys and girls. Parents encouraged the differences in many ways such as telling the girls to go to the kitchen with their mothers and the boy to play outside with his toys. These types of differences of gender role which normally begins early in life persists throughout life, these differences in the roles given to people due to gender distinction is virtually in all aspects of life. For example the exercise of power, decision making, control over resources, in almost all societies, there is dominance of the male figure, women always remain behind or at the background as it is the men that exercise the power, they are the ones that take all major decisions about who is to do what, as well as control over the family resources. In most societies women are powerless, she is not allowed to even take a decision on how many children, she is to bear. The most painful part of it all is that in most societies especially in Africa, the girls are not always allowed to make choices as to who she wants to marry, the girl is

sometimes betrothed even when she is at a tender age by her father, without the knowledge and consent of the mother.

ROLE OF THE FEMALE GENDER IN SOME TRADITIONAL HAUSA ORAL FOLK-TALES

In any Hausa community traditionally the male gender has an upper hand over the female gender, he is the alpha and omega of the family that is he takes major and important decision of the family. The economy and finances of the family is controlled by the man, although it is the women that labour for the family, she and her children are absolutely controlled by the man, who is the head of the family and she as a female and active member of the family is not and does not get involved in any decision making in the family. She is not recognized in the community, no matter how rich or industrious she is, she is always relegated at the background and is completely controlled by the husband. She is only saddled with the responsibility of the house like sweeping, cooking, washing, child-bearing and going to the farm, to work for her husband's large "barn". Before the contact with the Arabs and the Europeans, the Hausa man, is polygamous by nature, he can marry as many wives as he can, the more wives he has, the richer he becomes, because in those days a woman with her children normally go to the husband's big farm to work for him. After harvesting all the proceeds from the farm, he safely keeps in his barn, he has absolute control over it, he only gives food as he wishes, so the woman and the children have to farm for their food and for solving some of their problems.

To illustrate the position of the female gender or the role of the female gender as shown in most of the traditional tales, we are going to discuss on the following tales.

1. The story of "RuwanBagaja":- It is a story of a man with two wives and their children. But the man apparently discriminates amongst the wives and the children, the favorite wife and her child are loved most. She is known as "Mowa" (the traditional name for a loved wife) while the other one who is not loved and is rejected is the "Bora" (that is the rejected or not loved wife). "Mowa" and her daughter are loved and pampered by the father, to the extent that they do not do any household work. It is left to the "Bora" and her child. They cook, sweep, wash and do all the household work, but that is not enough, whenever anything goes wrong, it is their fault, and will be blamed for that. They will definitely regret for an offence they have not committed. So one day the daughter of "Mowa" wetted the bed, but because they are the favoured and loved ones, the blame was put on the daughter of "Bora". She was told to go and wash the sleeping mat at a river called "RuwanBagaja" in a bid to send her away, so that she doesn't come back, because the river is unknown and it is only heard of in tales. The daughter of "Bora" sets-out to go and wash the mat at "River Bagaja", she walked and walked until at last she saw a river. She greeted the river and asked if it is the "RuwanBagaja", the river replied that no, that it is a river of deliciously prepared rice and stew, she can sit down and eat, she said no, thank you, that she will proceed to look for "Ruwanbagaja", she passed so many rivers of deliciously

prepared dishes and the rivers offering her to sit down and eat, but she will thank them and refused the offer. At last she reached the river, after she has finished washing the mat, suddenly there was a heavy cloud and it starts to rain heavily, so she quickly looked and ran for shelter. She saw a hut, she went, knocked and greeted the owner of the hut, whom she saw is a human leg with no other parts of the body. She was obedient to the leg and respectful that at dawn she thanked the leg for its hospitality and said she wants to set for home. The leg gave her six eggs and told her to take three, so she took three small ones, and told her what to do and what not to do, and she abided by the rules. So when she finally broke the eggs, she suddenly turned into a very rich girl with camels and horses all saddled with money, gold, and all other pleasantries of life like beautiful clothing, bags and baggage's of food items. In short all that people wish to possess in order to be rich and comfortable in one's life, and every one waiting for her instructions. When she reached home everyone was surprise at her luck and suddenly the father took sides with them, a very beautiful house was built for them made of gold and other precious stones, and the prince, who is the King's only son came and married her. The "Mowa" on seeing the luck of the daughter of "Bora" told her daughter to wet her sleeping mat. The following day she sets for washing the matt too, on reaching the River of rice and stew, she asked the river if it is the River of Bagaja arrogantly without any salutation to the River. The River answered that it is not the River Bagaja but she can eat delicious rice and stew, she looked at it arrogantly and said of course". I will eat even without your permission". She carried on to all the other Rivers eating whatever she saw. At last she reached the River Bagaja, washed the mat as she just finished washing, the sky was heavy with clouds. Suddenly there was a heavy down pour of rain, she quickly turn and saw a hut, so she just ran and bumped into the room, without knocking. On seeing the leg talking she laughed and and made fun of the leg, she slept there for the night and the leg has to wake her up to leave at dawn. She starts to go, thinking maybe he will not give the eggs to her as was given to her sister, when she asked, she was given six eggs to choose three from, of course she took the bigger ones, and did not follow the instructions given to her. When she broke the eggs, she just saw lepers, ugly, blind and sick people with different kinds of diseases, smelling of pus, and flies all over them, and with donkeys carrying bags of rags and unwanted things all following her and calling her name. She ran but they followed her. On reaching home, her mother saw the misfortune that has befallen them and then started crying, and ran to her husband to tell him, but she was shocked when he came instead of comforting her, he sends her away. She became frustrated and ran into the bush; her daughter followed her that is the last of them.

While as can be seen from this tale, the father or husband who is married to two wives, freely segregates one of them so much so that she is turned to a

housemaid saddled with responsibilities of all the house chores. Not only that her daughter is not recognized, she is also treated like a housemaid. The father neglects them with the mother; they suffer from a lot of neglect and are practically maltreated by him. But because the female gender is relegated and has no right or power to complain, she has to be submissive to whatever situation she finds herself, they remain so. We also saw the “Bora” and her child, ending up to become rich and comfortable, whereas the “Mowa” and her child who were before the most loved and pampered ended up in the bush. This is so because the feminine gender is always seen as a weak character, malicious, selfish and wicked, anything bad is associated with the female gender because instead of the tale to end tragically for the husband who is the principle actor, that is he was the one that neglected and segregated the “Bora” and her child. He was also part of the decision taken to send the daughter of “Bora” to wash at the “RuwanBagaja”, which no one knows where it is located. By implication the daughter of “Bora” was sent, so that she gets lost in the forest or to be eaten-up by some wild animals, but because the masculine gender is very powerful and is seen with high esteem and he is always associated with success, bravery, kindness; in short he is always faultless, we saw how the story ended up, with the Bora and her child accepting him and moving to their new found riches with him. We have also seen that the “Bora” though neglected and maltreated by the husband cannot protest even when she knows that by sending her daughter to the River Bagaja, her daughter is going to be eliminated systematically. She was patient and submissive to the decision, because of the position of the female gender; that is, she is always at the background with no power or right to complain or protest.

2. The next tale is the tale of “Ta-kitse”, It is a tale of an old woman who has no one in the world, but her cow, which she bought from the proceeds of her petty trading. She takes good care of the cow and feeds it well, that it grew very, very fat. So one day “gizo”, the spider and “trickster” came looking for alms. “Gizo” suddenly had a glimpse of the cow, without waiting for the alms, he quickly ran to the King and told him about the story of the big fat cow. On hearing the story the King sent gizo with his guards to go and bring the old woman and the cow. They went and brought them. He told the old woman that he likes the cow, as such he is going to slaughter it. So after slaughtering the cow the old woman was asked which part of the cow she likes best. She said she likes the intestines and the organs. On reaching home the old woman put the intestines and organs in a big pot and covered it. After one week, she opened the pot and seven beautiful young girls made each from one of the cow’s organ came out. These beautiful young girls became the old woman’s daughters and companions. They continued living a happy life with the old woman doing all the household chores for their mother. As God wills it “gizo” again came seeing these young beautiful girls, he

quickly ran and told the King. Immediately, the king and his men set-out to the old woman's house. On his arrival, the King and his men, the old woman welcomed them, and asked one of her daughter's to bring water for the guests. Ta-kitse was the youngest, fairest and most beautiful amongst them, so she took water to the King. On seeing her king said he is going to marry her. The old woman did not have an option nor the daughter the will or the power to protest. As such the King took her away and married her. But the old woman told him that she is made from fat, as such she should not be allowed to go out in the sun or near fire, if she dare does so, she is going to melt, so the King took her to his palace and called all his other wives and told them about his new bride, that she should never go into the sun or near the fire to cook. Therefore, he built a new apartment for her and brought her servants that do everything for her. The other wives became jealous and planned to make her cook whenever the King is out of town. As God wills it, there was some problem with some neighbouring towns, so the King and his people had to go to the battle ground. They had to fight their enemies, when the King left they called her and made her to cook, she immediately melted. The king was called back from the battle ground and he called the old woman, who came and collected all the melted fat and again put it inside the pot. After one week, Ta-kitse was back in her original form. The old woman took her back to her husband, the King. The King called all the people in the town, assembled his wicked wives and then Ta-kitse was called and turbaned as the Queen and he called one of his brave warriors and told him to chop-off the heads of all his wicked wives and their accomplices. But Queen Ta-kitse said no, she has forgiven them. However, the King said they should still be vanished from his land. Ta-kitse, her mother the old woman and her other sisters lived happily ever after with the King in the palace.

From these tale of Ta-kitse we can clearly see that the feminine gender is a character who is weak, cannot make decision for herself, she doesn't have the right or the power to protest. Look at the way the King just came and took away the old woman's only possession - her cow, the one that she bought with her hard earned money. The King again came back for the second time, and took away one of her daughter's, the most beautiful and youngest amongst them, without her permission and without the girl's consent. But because they are women they don't have a voice, there is no one to protest and rescue them out of this selfish attitude of the King. The masculine gender is always portrayed as someone with good character, and anything he does is always correct and on the right path. That is why the King used his male dominance and powers to take away the old woman's only cow which she cherishes and to come back again to take away one of her daughter's. Not only has that he freely segregated amongst his wives by loving and pampering Ta-kitse. All his actions are not seen as offences, because the male gender's characters are always portrayed as good but look at the king's

wives who protested because they were segregated and cannot take it. They were portrayed as malicious and are too jealous and have wicked minds, at the end of it all the king took a decision to cut off their heads. This too is viewed by the people as a right decision and is the penalty they pay for being wicked. But as for the king, because he is a man goes scout free and is at the end of the tale seen as a good husband having brought the old woman and the other sisters to stay together with them. Another thing that was clearly illustrated in this tale is the fact that however rich or industrious a woman is she is always submissive to the decisions of the male gender.

3. The last tale to discuss is about a story called "Gwi-da-yara", a story of a man with three wives, but unfortunately all the three wives are barren. So one day the husband went to a native doctor and got some medicinal herbs for the wives, when he came back he called two of the wives he loved most and gave the herbs to them. The other wife was not given so after they have thrown the used herbs at the refuse dump, she took it, washed it and used it too, as God will have it, they all became pregnant and put to bed on the same day. On the seventh day, that is the day of giving names to the babies, he named the two daughters but for the daughter of the third wife, he refused to name her. So the mother begged and begged for a name for her daughter, he gave her a useless and meaningless name Gwi-da-yara. The girls grew up and were ready for marriage, he married off the two girls to his friend's sons, but as for Gwi-da-yara, (the other girl), he said she should follow him. She started following him, when they came to the middle of the forest he saw a big snake, and said to her, "this is your husband follow it wherever it goes". So she bent down and thanked her father. She followed the snake whenever it goes, at last the snake climbed her body and twisted itself round her, but she was not frightened, suddenly the snake changed into a human being, standing before her is a very handsome young man. So he narrated her/his story that he is charmed by someone and will never get well until when his wife finally comes to him. She also narrated her side of story to him, he took her home, and there she found out that he was a prince. They were married and a very beautiful gold plated house was built for them. After sometimes, the father came to the very spot he left her with the snake, and saw a very beautifully built house, and asked of "Gwi-da-yara", her maids quickly corrected him and said she is princess Gwi-da-yara, who happens to be by the window. She called her maids; they brought him into the house. After spending one week in the house, he said he was leaving for home, Princess Gwi-da-yara and her husband the Prince gave him a lot of money, gold, cloths, house maids and all pleasantries of life with horses to escort him back. Princess Gwi-da-yara and her husband the Prince were very generous, and helpful to her other stepmothers and sisters. They lived happily ever after.

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From these tales the role of the feminine gender is clearly stated. She is submissive, tolerant, and weak and endures all hardships that came to her way. While the masculine gender has a right and power to do whatever he deems fit, he can discriminate, humiliate and even throw-away the wife and her child if he doesn't love them, as illustrated in these tale. The woman cannot and does not have the power to protest any injustice subjected to them, she has to endure it, because that is her position always at the background and submissive.

As we have seen from the three tales we have studied, the male gender is the head of the family, he has unlimited powers, he can marry as many wives as he wants, and he is at liberty to love the ones he wants and neglect or reject the one he doesn't love with her children. And at the same time enjoys some privileges from such a wife, because she cooks, washes and goes to his farm to work for him, and he cannot or is not questioned by anyone. He is the decision maker and the controller of the economy of the family, in all the tales, the men are portrayed as good, powerful, and trustworthy people. In the tale of Ruwan-bagaja the female gender is subjected to all hardship, labour and rejection, while in Ta-kitse, the old woman and her daughter are submissive and accepted the kings show of greed and power, in the tale of Gwi-daryara, we have seen total rejection, and not wanted and loved by both Gwi-daryara and her mother. In all the three tales there is an element of weakness, rejection, submissiveness and also the female gender is perceived as jealous and wicked as in the case of the tale of ruwanBagaja and the King's wives in Ta-kitse.

While the female gender portrayed in all the three tales is an indication of how and what is the position of women in a typical Hausa society, that is she is always calm, weak, contented and submissive although she is sometimes perceived as being wicked, jealous and malicious, but in my opinion these is so because of the dominating characters of the masculine gender. They are so powerful and unapproachable to the female gender.

Conclusion

The folktales, like buildings, are perceived as artifacts designed to meet specific needs and aspirations of those who construct and re-construct them. The central purpose of folktales is to express certain problems or concerns dear to the community. The Hausa tale is mimetic, that is to say, it recreates and represents objects in the real world of the Hausa people. The tales are mirrors to the traditions and ways of life of the Hausa people. The feelings, thoughts, decisions, history, values and actions of the Hausa people reflect the tradition and customs of the people through which these tales are made-up. The tales provides avenues where the people's traditional values are presented and acted.

The feminine gender represents the negative while the masculine represents the positive. The female character is cast as weak while the male is cast as strong, both morally and physically. In most Hausa tales the listeners are made to develop a relationship of love/hate towards the characters, the female characters are usually portrayed as weak, gullible, foolish, wicked and jealous, while the male characters are portrayed as courageous, brave, strong and

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tough. This clear categorization of the character traits is an indication of gender dominance by the male gender. It is also important to note that this kind of image construction process has already been built through the language used in the tales. It is however important to note that everyday language has in-built gender biasness. The male powerful and superior images are always reflected in the tales, expressions always portray the male above the female physically, intellectually and symbolically. Look for example at the powers of the King in the tale of "Takitse", and how in the tales of "RuwanBagaja" and "Gwi-da-yara", the father pretends to be insensitive to the predicament of "Bora" and their daughters. The men in the tales are portrayed as powerful, insensitive, unapproachable to show he is the head and leader of the household, while the women on the other hand are loyal, kind, generous, hardworking, tolerant. These character traits helps the young ones on to imbibe different images, boys are courageous while girls are weak, boys independent while girls are dependable, it is through the binary relationship presented in the process of tale telling that helps in the gender distinction ideology.

Finally, also the structure of the tales is usually built with gender differentiated images women/girls are weak, dependable, jealous and evil, while the male gender are portrayed as powerful, strong, courageous and morally upright. It is through these that the dominance of the male gender over the female is portrayed. It can also be attested that the tales are mirror images of the society, although the folk-tales mirror the social realities they are at the same time a medium through which the Hausa people construct ideologies about gender relations.

Suggestions

1. This study suggest that scholars, researchers should be encouraged to undertake researches in areas of traditional and cultural heritage, as they hold the key to our understanding of a people's philosophy of life.
2. The study of folktale in our curriculum and syllabuses from the primary level to tertiary level should be included especially in Africa because when we undertake researches in this area, they will help us to solve modern problems of power at the family and society level.
3. Seminars, conference, and workshops on our traditions and culture should be organized more often so as to keep and preserve these traditions for our younger ones.

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