

Today's Igbo Poems: A Picture of Nigerian Society

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ABSTRACT

The nation today is faced with lots of problems ranging from frustrations of the educated but jobless citizens struggling hard to secure a job, to the insecurity and robbery activities in the cities, this reflects the country as a failed nation. It is this phenomenon that has attracted the attention of the study. Igbo poets in Nigeria are usually burdened by the prominent issues that affect the trend of life in the society. They use the medium of poetry to showcase and express their feelings towards these societal flaws or ills in order to attract a change to improve on the ugly situations. The objective of the study therefore is to highlight on the sufferings, obstacles, challenges, despair as the masses struggle to survive with the harsh economy in the country as revealed in the two selected Igbo poems of Okediadi, AN. and Onuoha, J. The study is based on the sociological theory of Karl Marx. The survey research method was adopted. These two poems were analyzed-*Obodo Onicha* [city of Onitsha] and *Achomoru* [Job-Hunting]. The study identifies that people in the country are suffering hard to put food on their tables. There are also evidences of poverty, hunger, starvation, wants, lawlessness and insecurity written all over the faces of the embattered people. The study also outlines the language and figurative expressions in the poems. Some recommendations were given hoping that the suggestions offered can positively bring a transformational change in the dehumanizing poverty stricken society

Keywords: Poems, Igbo, Society and Nigeria.

Introduction

Literature reflects the society. It is the duty of the poet to highlight and bring to the fore, the problems confronting individuals as it affects the generality of the society. [1], in a research on the satirical poems of Onyekaonwu observes that poets are naturally sensitive on how things stand in the society where they live, the attitudes of the people, their frustrations, concerns and protests; through criticisms, the moral cancers are exposed to protect the society from abuse as writers are known to play significant roles in the re-education, re-orientation and re-direction of the society. The works under research exposes the predicaments and frustrations witnessed today in the society as portrayed in the poems *Achomoru* Job-Hunting and *Obodo Onicha* Onitsha City written by Onuoha, J. And Okediadi, A. N. respectively [2]. It portrays a visionless, directionless, retrogressive and lawless nation where the people are suffocated because it is being besieged by decay and disorder.

In the poems, a blind and wasted generation is portrayed where the people only hope for a better tomorrow they are not too certain of. This is a society where jobs are not created but millions of youth graduate every year and roam about the streets showing a picture of a generation that is out of touch with the values that will make progress. Gone are the days when graduates are assigned jobs immediately they graduate from schools. People every day by day bemoan the poverty in the country caused by unemployment and a lack of opportunity for the youths which has made them restive and indulge in anti-social vices. Even in the market places especially, in Onitsha market as the poet Okediadi portrays it in Obodo Onicha [Onitsha City], there are many chaos, disorder and lawlessness as virtually every person troop into the city of Onitsha to make a living from the market. The jobless unemployed graduates/secondary school leavers, the touts, short changer, pick pockets, looters, motor-cycle transport riders who could not be gainfully employed, all besiege the market in order to eke out some living. The picture of the nation today is that of scarcity, hunger, starvation, depressed economy, hopelessness, suicidal thoughts and lawlessness [3, 4, 5].

Everybody knows and agrees that all is not well with the nation. The people walk with unsteady uncertain steps for a new tomorrow which leaves people often frustrated. Hopes are dashed with reckless abandon as the present crops of leaders parade as patriots but are all insincere with mere promises to trick the people. This is a country that has failed to follow the footsteps of their founding fathers and therefore can never make progress. The poets draws attention to the mess, the doom and frustrating helplessness of the suffering young educated men and women roaming the streets in search of the non-existent white collar jobs in the country. Education was once a sure way of breaking the cycle of poverty but now not much the case. Today, in almost all the African countries especially in Nigeria, many educated young people find it hard to secure employment [6, 7, 8].

Most of them get involved in the day to day hustling in the cities to make out a living. Not only are these unemployed masses seen in the market in the city of Onitsha, they also besiege and seek for survival in such markets all over Nigeria like Wuse market in Abuja, Balogun and Onyngbo market in Lagos. Ogbete main market in Enugu state, New market Aba in Abia state, Imo International modern market in Imo state, Kurmi market in Kano, Zaki Biam Yam market in Benue state, Jos main market in Plateau state, Oja-oba/Orita Merin market Ibadan- Oyo state to mention but a few. From the two poems of Nigerian Igbo poets, the picture of Nigerian society is reflected exhibiting confusion of the jobless men and women, trying their best to survive, roaming the city market all over the country, most especially the city of Onitsha in Anambra state, Nigeria in search of daily bread [9, 10 11].

Job-Hunting

Wikipedia defines Job- Hunting or job- searching as the act of looking for employment, due to unemployment, discontent with a current position or desire for a better position. The job hunter first looks for job vacancies or employment opportunities. In the society today, the adage, it is not what you know, it is who you know, could be true when it comes to job - hunting. One of the greatest problems in the country is the inability of the government to provide jobs for the teeming population especially the youths that are wasting away. When people job -hunt and fail to obtain one, after so many searches, they become depressed, frustrated and hopeless and can resort to other negative vices like stealing, drug addiction, prostitution, kidnapping ritual killing, suicide [12, 13]. Sometimes it creates a positive impact whereby the job- hunter channels the energy to other useful resource like developing ones God given talents, acquiring or learning a skill, resorting to farming and agricultural activities.

Today, Nigerians are considered victims of unemployment, hardships, hunger and starvation and [1, 5, 7] observes that 'kwashiorkor [a malnutrition disease caused by severe

deficiency of protein] is gradually returning'. Parents and children are suffering untold hardship and most men find it very difficult to meet up with the family responsibility due to joblessness or under payments in the working class.

Unemployment is the greatest pain plaguing youths in the country and the biggest challenge in the country too. This has forced many good brains to leave the country. [9], criticizes the state of hardship that has taken over the land due to lack of sensitive leadership. Both the rich and poor are in tears screaming because our collective sorrow is more than we can bear.

ACHOMORU

JOB HUNTING

Chai!

Kee ihe m ga-akoro chi m
Na umu mmadu na-agaghari n'uzo
Ka aturu enweghi onye ozuzu
Tufiakwa!

Awful!

What am I to tell my God
That people are roaming the streets
Like sheep without shepherds
God forbid!

Achomoru
I ruola ala
I na-eweda mmadu n'ala
Na-ebute obara mgbali elu.

Job hunting
You have committed abomination
You reduce people
And inflict High Blood Pressure

Achomoru
Onye dabara n'onya gi atola
Ndi mahadum na-aputa chowa oru
employment
Ndi sekondiri na-aputa na-akwughari.
Amaghi onye bu onye
Ufodu lekata ihe i na-eme ha.
Ha etinye isi n'azumahia

Job Hunting
One in your trap is finished
Graduates from universities seek for
Secondary school leavers roam about,
We do not know who is who,
Some who cannot endure these
Enter into trading.

Achomoru
I meelanu ufodu abanye oru abalidiegwu
Ufodu na-aga na dibia
Ka ha nweta oru

Job Hunting
You have turned some to robbers
Some consult native doctors
To get employed

Achomoru
I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo
Akwukwo anya mbu
I mere dimkpa o na-anata mkpari n'aka ndi o toro
insults from his inferiors
I mere ka mmadu ree ugwu ya
Chi! aru emeela.
Umụ Naijiria bilienụ.

Job Hunting
You reduced a graduate to seem as if
He had never seen a school
You made a full grown man receive
You made man to reduce prestige
Abominable!
Nigerians arise

Butenu mma na egbe unu
Ka anyi chwa ya
Ka anyi nwudo onye iro
Gbuo ya
Lie ya.

Come along with your matchets and guns
For us to chase him
And arrest this enemy
And kill it
And bury it

This is a poem of six stanzas written by Onuoha, J. It is a lamentation poem that laments and condemns the rate at which unemployment is increasing in society.

The themes are:

- A. The high rate of unemployment.
- B. Hardship for the job seekers
- C. Humiliations and insults resulting from job hunting.
- D. A solution to unemployment.

Unemployment is a serious problem facing the country which no-one really knows what the solution can be. The poet is touched by the plight of these university and secondary school leavers who roam about the street like sheep without shepherds, looking for jobs that never exist. Most times, these job seekers lose motivation and focus after countless rejections, such that they would not like to continue because they do not want to look like a nuisance. Searching for jobs day after day with no success is a very hard experience. All these can lead to depression, pessimism, low self esteem, stress, anxiety, insecurity, sickness, as the poet says,

I na-ebute obara mgbalielu
 You give high blood pressure (Stanza 2 line 4)

The frustrations and humiliations and worries associated with these can bring high blood pressure, loss of personal identity. People need a job to support and sustain themselves, have a home, food, decent clothing, access to a doctor, have a sense of pride and self-worth, for their survival and to stop boredom. Many people, both the graduates and secondary school leavers, are desperately seeking for jobs but cannot secure any. In a highly stressful situation, these job-hunters opt for anything available to do like trading or other business in order to put some food on the table. Some of these unemployed, because they are unable to earn money and meet financial obligations, go to the extent of consulting native doctors or joining armed robbery in order to survive. Unemployment, lack of financial resources and social responsibility may push unemployed workers to take job that do not fit their skills or allow them to use their talents as the poet points out:-

<p>Achomoru I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo if</p> <p>Akwukwo anya mbu I mere dimkpa o na-anata mkpari n'aka ndi o toro insults from his inferiors</p> <p>I mere ka mmadu ree ugwu ya (Stanza 5 line 1-5)</p>	<p>Job Hunting You reduced a graduate to seem as</p> <p>He had not seen a school before You made a full grown man receive</p> <p>You made man to reduce prestige</p>
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In the society today, so many graduates of Law, Medical Laboratory Science, Geology, Nursing, and Petroleum Engineering are looking for jobs! It is heart breaking, humiliating and insulting to go on and on desperately seeking for a job and never getting one. This scarcity of job is also connected to crimes as people are finding alternative ways of obtaining money for survival. It can even cause suicide. People constantly get manipulated

trying to earn something for a living. Today these qualified graduates, drive commercial keke tricycle, motorcycles, learn tailoring, carpentry, open up restaurants and eating places, in order to survive in this country. It is distressful and annoying. The poet calls on all and sundry in the country to arise so that they can chase, arrest, kill and bury the biting scourge of unemployment, ravaging the society today.

It is however sad to point out that jobs exists only for the privileged few, jobs exist for the sons and daughters of the elites, the high class people, the affluent, the ruling class. These rich classes of people use their high connection to place and get their children or wards in high places or offices. Most parents fervently wish their children to enjoy the same gratifications that they have been fortunate enough to receive from their own rich business or careers. They therefore help them strive to get accomplished but the poor are mostly the victims of unemployment. To get rid of unemployment is just like trying to pass a cow through the eye of a needle.

[3] writes that during the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) job recruitment exercise, over nine million people applied for 4,500 posts and to make matters worse, they also had to pay N1, 000 each for processing the form. The department raked in over N6 billion in the year 2014. It is disturbing and unethical that such unscrupulous people are cashing in on other peoples miseries, knowing that these people are unemployed.

[10] warns that any society that fails to guarantee and maintain a steady means of livelihood is laying a foundation for insecurity which manifests itself in violence, war, rape, robbery, youth, restiveness, terrorism, wanton destruction of lives and property, examination malpractice, stealing, abduction, prostitution and thuggery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, depression and suicide. Many people especially the common man is exposed to poverty, helplessness and hopelessness

Many are struggling to survive without a job even those with a job are living from hand to mouth. There is tension in the land and it seems people feel there is no more hope. The environment is hostile, frustrating and unproductive especially for the younger ones, hence the reasons for the surge to leave the shores of this country for a better place. Many are deported from overseas and those who do not have the means to travel outside the country continue to cope with the system until they get to the breaking point of committing suicide. Nigeria today unfortunately are facing a high rate of suicide cases. The current economic hardship and recession we are passing through now is causing a lot of trauma to the citizens. In conclusion, the nation should however, get up from slumber and address the ugly situation for a better tomorrow.

OBODO ỌNỊCHA

Obodo Chukwu chọrọ mma.
Obodo a gọziri agọzi.
Were ọlọahịa a ma ama
Chọọ ya mma.
Obodo ndị ọbịa juputara
Ma karịa ndị nwe ala.
than the owners
Obodo nwere akụ nke ụwa.
Ogaranya na ogbenye,
Ihe ọma na ihe ọjọọ.
Ma cherekwa!
Gịni bụ olu a m na-anụ n'ime obodo a?

Obodo Ọnịcha!
Obodo ndị abalịdaegwu
Ji abalị mere ehie
Ma were ehie mere abalị.
Ụlọ ọbụla ha wakwutere
Egbe na mma ana-ada.
everywhere
Anyanwụ mmiri ejuputa anyanwụ ọbụla.
Obi a na-eti kpim! Kpim! Kpim!
Mkpụ enweghị ike ịputa n'ọnu
N'ihie iwu ndị abalịdegwu na-enye.
Ewo! Ihe mmadụ ka
A na-apụnara ya n'ike
Ndị uweojii na ndị agha
Agbaala mbọ ikpochapụ
Ndị omekome a n'obodo a
Ma ihe na-ebe ka na-ebe.

Ọ bụ gịni ka mmadụ mere
Mmadụ ibe ya n'ụwa a?
Mmadụ ejighị anyanwụ ọma
good faith
Ahụ nwanne ya.
Ihe mmadụ nwere na-abụ
Anyanwụ ụfụ nye onye ọzọ.
Ekworo na anyakwu juru ụwa.

Ma cherekwa!
Ugwọ ọrụ onye mmehie bụ ọnwụ.
Onyinye amara nke Chineke bụ ndụ ebeebe.
Ọtụtụ mgbe ka a na-egosị

THE CITY OF ONITSHA

A city God blesses
A blessed city
With this well-known market
God beautifies the city.
A city filled with foreigners

A city with the wealth of life
The rich and poor
Good and bad things
But wait?
What voice do I hear in this city?

The city of Onitsha
A city where robbers
Turned night to day time
And day time into night
Any house they storm into
Sounds of gun and machetes fill
Tears fill the eyes of all
And the people's heart will be beating fast
They cannot shout
Because of the rules the robbers give
Hei, snatching people's things
In intimidation
The police and the army
Have tried to wipe out
These hoodlums in this city
But to no avail

What has man done to you
Your fellow humans in this world?
People do not communicate effectively in

With his brothers
One's possession is usually
A source for envy for others
Strife and jealousy is everywhere.

But wait!
The wages of sin is death
God special gift is eternal life
Most times they are shown

N'ihe onyonyo ebe a gbagburu
Ndi abalidegwu a
Mana onwu ga-egbu nwankita
Anaghi ekwe ya anu isi nsi.
Otutu n'ime ha ka na-aga n'iru.
Ubochi niile bu nke onye ohi
Ma otu ubochi bu nke onye nwe ulo.

On television where these
Criminals are shot
But he the gods want to destroy
They first make mad
Majority continues to strive
Everyday is for the thief
But one day is for the owner.

Obodo Onicha!
I ghaghi igbosisi ndi ojoo a
Ka onya ha siri matara ha onwe ha.
Chekweba ndi ezigbo mmadu no n'ime gi
Ka ha kuo ezigbo mkpuru
Nke ga-atoputa otutu ezigbo ihe
Buru ngozi na uru nye ndi bi na ya .
N'ih ezi omume na-ebuli obodo elu
Ma ajo omume bu nkocha nye obodo.
Ka anyi dum tinye aka
Ma mee ka obodo Onicha
Buru ngozi na uru nye ndi bi na ya

City of Onitsha!
You must purge these evil people
So that they fall into their own traps
Protect the good in Onitsha
And plant good seeds
That will usher in good
A blessing and gain for the inhabitant
For righteousness extols a nation,
But sin is a reproach
Let us all join hands
And make the city of Onitsha
A blessing and gain for the inhabitants [8]

This is a satirical poem of five stanzas, written by Okediadi, N.A. The poet condemns the robbery activities going on in the city of Onitsha, a city blessed by God.

The themes are:

- A. Commotion and robbery activities in Onitsha.
- B. Lack of contentment among the people
- C. Insecurity in Onitsha.

The poet portrays the picture of what is happening in Onitsha every day. Onitsha is a city in Anambra state Nigeria with the biggest market in West Africa, people come to Onitsha from different parts of the world to buy or sell from the market. Most of the people in Onitsha are business people and traders who are not natives of Onitsha but are living in Onitsha, striving and seeking to survive in a difficult world where one must struggle to survive. The city of Onitsha is a place of commerce and industry, booming with people every blessed day. People from Cameroon, China, Indonesians, Taiwanese are some of the foreigners who troop into Onitsha market because they have one business or another to do with these Onitsha traders. The busy nature of the market, all day attracts all kinds of people, good and bad, rich and poor into the market, in search of what to do in order to earn a living. The poet describes it as:

Obodo nwere aku nke uwa	A city with the wealth of life
Ogaranya na ogbenye	The rich and the poor
Ihe oma na ihe ojoo	Good and bad things (Stanza 1, line 7-9).

The commercial city of Onitsha has so many markets - the Onitsha Main Market, Ose, Ochanja, Relief Market, Electronics Dealers, housing Construction Equipment Market, Ogbọ Efere (Plates and Ceramics), Ogbọ ogwụ (Medications and drugs) etc. In this city, one can buy virtually any commodity wanted, both genuine and fake. The bustle and hustle of this city makes the city lively because business booms everyday; cash, sales, business transactions go on in these markets daily. Because of all the markets in this commercial city, we see all kinds of people in search of daily bread - touts, job seekers, unemployed graduates and secondary school leavers, pick pockets, hoodlums, school drop-outs, apprentices, sales girls and boys, hawkers, beggars both refugees from Nigeria, Chad, Hausa, the Blind, other physically challenged persons, money doublers, street fighters, advertisers, on lookers, Okada riders, keke riders, bus drivers, barrow pushers. All of these roam the streets of the commercial city of Onitsha, in a chaotic and disorganized manner trying their very best on virtually anything in order to survive the hard economy and put food on their table.

The poet refers to Onitsha city as 'A city with the wealth of life' [stanza1 line 8].The numerous markets in Onitsha bustles with wealth and

the traders bring in numerous containers of goods annually. They trade on everything- clothing, jewelry, household, industrial and office equipments. In this market, both the young, the unemployed and the old bustle and hustle to make an income. The market remains a sanctuary of life progress where people have the opportunity to rise from nobody to somebody and from puppets to millionaires. The main market is heavily crowded showing the eternal interest of Ndigbo[Igbo people]in buying and selling business. There are indiscriminate erection of plazas and shops clustered here and there to expand the businesses which has turned the market from an organized business environment to a planless society. The market stands like an eternal bread feeder to the people from various parts of Igbo land. The market is ever accommodating for beginners. Minor businesses are fully part of the day to day activities. One could see people involved in various lower categories of businesses like petty trading , hawkers of satchet water, nylon bags, coca-cola soft drinks, gala, meat pie, moi-moi, food vendors, lottery/raffle operators all attending to their financial needs and before you know it they start buying land to build houses.

In this market, the good, the bad and ugly are allowed. For this, people often encounter pick pockets, handset snatchers and outright armed robbers who rob people at gun point. People lose their money and other valuable

Possessions in the market daily.

Some of these sets of people have metamorphosized to criminals who rob people day and night. The poet describes the confusions and the recklessness and shootings of the robbers as this;

Egbe na mma ana ada. everywhere	Shootings of guns and clinging of machetes fill
Anya mmiri ejuputa anyị	Tears fill our eyes
Obi a na-eti, kpim! Kpim!	And the people's heart will be beating fast
Mkpu enweghị ike iputa n'ọnu	They cannot shout
N'ihị iwu ndị abalidiegwu na-enye	Because of the orders the robbers give

(stanza 2, line 5-7)

The city of Onitsha in Nigeria is known for lawlessness and recklessness because many people come with huge sum of money to buy, sell and make business transactions. Robbers, gunmen and criminals of all sorts are all over the place attacking traders, tenants, and pedestrians in the streets and even writing letters to inform tenants that they are coming. Most times these robbers order them not to shout or they would be gunned down. The police and army patrol have used several security agents to curb the menace but to no avail. 'The Massob', 'The Bakassi Boys', 'Cobra Squad', 'Vigilante', 'Operation Mkpochapụ', 'Fire for Fire'; all these security groups have been used to comb out crime rates in Onitsha still, criminals operate daily in Onitsha. The new government recently, staged war with the touts operating at Upper Iweka Road, Onitsha in Anambra state of Nigeria, and cleared all the motor parks to ease traffic congestion and destabilize the great number of touts operating in those garages. It would not take a long time; these touts will come back in a different way to seek for another means of survival. It is an uphill task to wipe out criminals from the commercial city of Onitsha, though certain measures have been used for the eradication but it never seemed to work. As the poet points out;

Ndị uweojii na ndị agha	The police and the army
Agbaala mbọ ikpochapụ	Have tried to wipe out
Ndị omekome a n'obodo a	These robbers from the town
Ma ihe na - ebe ka na - ebe	But to no avail (Stanza 2 line 13 - 16)

The poet points out that these criminals are hard nuts to track down and cannot be stopped. That means that there are security lapses in the state. People's lives are in danger especially the poor who these robbers attack in their homes or streets. The rich in society have security outfit that are armed either following them as escorts or standing at the entrance of their gates, twenty four hours daily, so they are not always perturbed.

What will I tell my God
That people are roaming the streets
Like sheep without a shepherd (Stanza 1, line 1-4)

The poet narrates or expresses herself in such a manner that the reader is compelled to consider her point of view or opinions. The poet employs the first person's point of view which involves the pronouns, 'I' or 'We' to express her inner feelings.

Diction: The language of the poet is simple and easily understood. She uses straight to the point expressions to show concern over the plight of the numerous unemployed youths roaming about. The choice of words shows deep care, concern and sympathy for the unemployed. At the end of the poem, the poet shows how perturbed she is over this [menace that she pleads and prays for solution over this ugly condition of lack of job.](#)

Tone: The poet's tone is pleading, sympathetic and appealing.

Figurative Language: Some of the figures of speech found in the poem are:

Simile:

- i. Ka aturu enweghi onye ozuzu
Like a sheep without a shepherd (Stanza 1, line 4)
- ii. I mere grajueti o di ka onye na-ahutubeghi ulo akwukwo (Stanza 5, line 2)
You made a graduate seem as if he had never seen a school

Personification:

- i. Achomoro, i ruola ala (Stanza 2, line 1-2)
Job hunting, you have committed abomination
- ii. Achomoru, onye dabara n'olu gi atola (Stanza 3, line 1-2)
Job hunting, one under your trap is finished
- iii. Butenu mma na egbe unu
Ka anyi chwa ya (stanza 6, line 1)
Bring your matchets and guns
Let us chase him

The poet addresses 'Achomoru' (Job hunting) as if it were a human being and beckons on all to chase it away with matchets and guns. The poet uses this figure of speech to make an abstraction clearer and more real to the reader.

Repetitions

- i. Achomoru, (Stanza 2, line 1)
Achomoru (Stanza 3, line 1)
Achomoru (Stanza 4, line 1)
Achomoru (Stanza 5, line 1)
- ii. Ndi Mahadum na-aputa chwa oru

Ndi sekondiri na-aputa na-akwughari (Stanza 3, line 3-4)

iii. Ka anyi chwa ya

Ka anyi nwudo onye... (Stanza 6, line 2-3)

The constant repetitions of 'Achomoru', 'Ndi', 'ka anyi', gives the poem a musical effect.

Assonance:

i. Achomoru

I ruola ala

ii. Achomoru,

Onye dabara n'onya gi atola

There is a continual repetitions of the vowel sounds 'a' 'o' which provide rhythm.

Symbol:

i. 'Butenu egbe na mma unu ka anyi chwa ya'.

'Egbe' na 'mma' = Knife and gun represents solutions, remedy or something that would be used to fight unemployment.

The Writer's Style of Writing in 'Obodo Onicha'

Exposition: The poet tries to expose the ills going on in the commercial city of Onitsha to convey his message across to the reader in a way that all the vices are illustrated vividly to be understood by the readers.

Diction: The words are easily understood. The words connote lawlessness, commotion and disorder, used to destroy the robbers' activities in the city of Onitsha. For example;

Ulo obula ha wakwutere

Egbe na mma a na-ada

Anyanwuru mmiri ejuputa onye obula

Obi na-eti, kpim, kpim, kpim (Stanza 2, line 5 - 8)

Any house they storm into

Sounds of guns and machets fill everywhere

And the peoples' heart will be beating fast

Tears fill the heart of all

The words used in this poem depicts a chaotic environment

Tone: The tone of the poet registers disgust as the poem describes the lawlessness in the city of Onitsha.

Figurative Expression: Some of the figurative expressions in the poems are:

Metaphor:

- i. Ugwọ ọrụ onye mmehie bụ ọnwụ (stanza 4, line 2)
The wages of sin is death
- ii. Onyinye amara nke Chineke bụ ndị ebeebe (stanza 4, line 3)
- iii. Ma ajọ omume bụ nkọcha nye obodo
Sin is a reproach to a nation. (Stanza 5, line 4-5)

Rhetorical Question:

- i. Gịni bụ olu a m na-anụ n'ime obodo a?
What voice do I hear in this city?
- ii. O bụ gịni ka mmadụ mere
Mmadụ ibe ya n'ụwa a? (Stanza 3, line 1-2)
What has man done
To his fellow humans in this world?

Ideophone:

- i. Obi ana-eti kpim, kpim kpim – People's heart will be beating fast
The poet's use of ideophone creates a vivid representation of an idea in a sound.

Repetition:

- i. Obodo Chukwu... (Stanza 1, line 1)
Obodo a goziri... (Stanza 1, line 2)
Obodo nwere akụ... (Stanza 1, line 7)
Obodo Onitsha... (Stanza 2, line 1)
Obodo ndị abalidiegwu... (Stanza 2, line 2)

The continual repetition of 'Obodo' creates emphasis on the poem and makes it sound musical.

Proverbs:

- i. Mana ọnwụ ga-egbu nwa nkịta
Anaghị ekwe ya anụ isi nsi (Stanza 4, line 7-8)
But whoever the gods want to kill, they first destroy.

Oxymoron:

- i. Ji abali mere ehie
Ma were ehie mere abali (Stanza 2, line 3-4)

The poet's use of two contradictory sentences causes the reader to think twice and thrice.

Recommendations

The poet in the poem *Obodo Onitsha* criticizes the lawlessness and robbery activities in Onitsha. It is recommended that leaders should learn from the exemplary leadership style of people like Nelson Mandela of South Africa who saw the people as more important than self interest. Leaders should work towards solving the people's problem and challenges and

introduce people oriented program that will eliminate unemployment, insecurity, illiteracy, for the welfare of the masses.

The poet, in the poem *Achomoru* criticizes the inability of the government to provide jobs for the youths. It is therefore recommended that as Babatunde (2014) says that we should consider agriculture as a vehicle for inclusive and sustainable economic transformation for eradicating poverty and hunger. At the moment we are importing food worth about 40 billion dollars into Africa every year, yet we have the potential to grow food not only for ourselves but also for exportation around the world. Agriculture can be a real driving force for youth and improvement in the life and majority of the people.

In the 60s, Nigeria's export trade was fuelled by the agro-industry and constituted mainly on cocoa, groundnuts, rubber, palm oil, palm kernel, bean seed, copra tin ore, columbite. Today, Nigerians over reliance on oil export as a major revenue earner was no longer sustainable. The agriculture products we once exported are today neglected. Efforts therefore should be geared towards reviving the agricultural sector as the fortunes of oil in the global market have turned to worse. Even in the traditional Igbo communities, we have to stimulate a re-think and retrace our roots and go back to our cultural occupations that have sustained our forefathers and humanity even up till now [7, 8].

Agriculture is very important to humanity and should not be toyed with. St Paul admonishes, '*Let him who refuses to work not eat*' [2 Thessalonians 3;10] Farming and rearing livestock like cows, goats, sheep, grass cutter, pig fowls, fishing, preserving it by smoking and establishing fish pond, palm wine tapping (ngwọ and ngwụ enu), pottery making, cooking pots, plates, bowls, weaving cloth, mat weaving which can be improved to textile materials, carving doors, stools, wooden gongs and utensils from iroko trees, blacksmithing like matchets, guns, hoes, knives, daggers and even traditional medicine making, all these can make huge economic gains. Today most ailment that cannot be cured with the modern or orthodox medications are taken care of with the local traditional herbs and medicine. These traditional occupations are very important especially now that no employment exists. They can be improved to serve this generation better.

Furthermore, the elected leaders are always aloof to the needs and problems of the people. Those to be voted into power must therefore be people who have the interest of the people and community at heart. Elected officials are directly responsible to the people and should help solve the myriad of problems confronting the people. Any leader who is not responsive to the needs of the people should be voted out for the responsible ones to replace them. People should play an active role in choosing who to be voted into power

because most of these elected leaders never keep their promises especially in assisting the people erase the pains of unemployment in the society.

The study of Igbo literature especially poetry should be encouraged. Literature aims to encourage thoughtful discussions and instill a love of reading in young people. It allows students to practice and develop the skills and strategies of good writing, providing a way for the young ones to engage in critical thinking and reflections. It also increases student learning because they are often credited with instilling the love of reading and discussions.

Civil servants and political leaders who falsify their ages, who are old enough to retire, should honourably retire. These elderly ones in service are not strong enough to face the challenges posed by the current global world. By so doing, we can gainfully employ and empower the idle youths.

In the current economic hardship, we must teach our children never to take illegal steps to acquire wealth like indulging in anti-social behaviours like robbery, kidnapping ,prostitution for work without the blessing of God cannot lead to true prosperity..People should work hard for there is dignity in labour, shun evil and make money in honest ways.

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