



## **OBTAINING MASCULINITY IN AYÒBÁMÌ ADÉBÁYÒ'S NOVEL *STAY WITH ME* (2016)**

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### **Abstract**

This article about the analysis of a novel *Stay With Me* (2016) by Ayòbámi Adébayò. The problem of this analysis focuses on the issue of obtaining masculinity. The aim of analyses is to find out how far the characters Akin and Dotun exposes the issue of obtaining masculinity. This analysis involved fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict), and setting to reveal the issue of obtaining masculinity in the novel. The analysis deals with the concepts of Patriarchy by Roger Horrocks that is supported by the text and context based interpretation. The result of this analysis shows that the protagonist are Nigerian men who attain his authority to obtain masculinity. Both characters become arrogant, compromised, and obsession. These can be seen by their cunning way to obtaining masculinity.

**Key words:** *Patriarchy, Masculinity, Men, Domination.*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The culture which is influenced by patriarchy system could harmful to the personality of men. The society constructs them as certain criteria, the men have to be masculine. They tend to be obsession with the recognition of society as a reflection of patriarchal culture. The men are ambitious to reach these criteria which is one of them be discovered as masculinity. Ironically, the failure in themselves and the social adjustment makes them afraid to fail to reach masculinity. They deceive themselves and society to prove that they have masculinity. They even prefer to use their authority for obtaining masculinity. The effect of it cause the men tend to be selfish to have power in him. They even play in a cunning way to prove that they have masculinity.

According to SPEARA dictionary (2016) obtaining means to get something that you want, especially through your own effort, skill, or work. Obtaining masculinity requires the men to challenge the power and privilege conferred to

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them. The masculinity itself is basically a value that develops in culture and becomes a requirement to the men. Unfortunately, they must obey the rules made by patriarchy. They have to successful to reach their own rule even they are unable to fulfill it. This situation make them as a victims by patriarchal culture.

One of the cultures influenced by patriarchy system is Nigeria. In Nigeria, the black men are very guarding the prestige of being patriarchy. Their appearance and economy become the selling price to achieve pride. For instance, the men in Nigeria scared to admit their weakness. They cover the fact that being not masculine as patriarchal standard from the society. They become burdened by the culture in Nigeria which requires every married couple must have children. Otherwise, they must accept the consequences of being ostracized even from being kicked out of the customary rules.

The crucial elements of patriarchy as currently experience them are heterosexual marriage. They can marry more than one woman as their ancestors do the same thing. In case of the family member, women have to rear her child and does the house work. Most property and other productive resources are controlled by men and they pass from one man to another, usually from father to son. They believe that this hierarchy has always existed and will continue, and like other rules of nature this one too cannot be changed.

This issue exposed in many literary works, such us poem, novel, prose and drama. This analysis focused on novel written by Ayòbámi Adébáyò. Her novel is related to this topic is *Stay With Me*. Her novel is shown through the effort of two Nigerian men who try to get approved from patriarchal society. Both characters in this analysis do the same underhanded action to maintain masculinity. This involves a distrust of others and a willingness to manipulate them. Further, this situation continues to occur and seems to be legalized by the construction` of patriarchal culture which assumes that the men have power. This issue is very interesting to discuss in this analysis.

## **B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The design of this research is qualitative, content analysis, that is to analyse the text of the novel *Stay With Me* (2016) by Ayòbámi Adébáyò. The data were collected from the quotations of the novel itself. The analysis was done through text and context-based interpretation. The novel was analyzed by fictional devices such as, character, setting, and plot (conflict). These devices connected to each other and gave the contribution in revealing the meaning of the novel. Characters and conflicts are used to reveal the way to obtain masculinity by analyzing character's reactions toward the conflict. Then, it gives contribution in process of analysis by giving help in revealing the meaning. In addition, this analysis is used the theory of patriarchy who argued by Roger Horrocks.

## B. DISCUSSION.

This chapter reveals the issues of *obtaining masculinity* by analyzing fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict), and setting. It is represented by the characters Akin and Dotun. Both characters are brothers who compromised to attain their authority to obtain masculinity. It can be seen from their cunning way through they have done. The act of obtaining masculinity can be shown through the characters.

### 1. The First Character

This topic focuses on discussing about the effort of the first character to obtain masculinity. To get masculinity, the first character uses his financial advantage. He uses his position to maintain his authority. He takes control his brother's life with his money. He sets a mission to get a child by paying his brother. He covers his weakness with his own money.

The first character uses his position to maintain his authority is the first strategy to show his domination through his wife as a leader of family. It can be seen from the following quotation.

*'You are deceiving me, abi?' I followed him to the door, grappling for words to tell him I did not really want to fight with him, to explain that I was afraid that he would leave me and I would be all alone in the world again. 'Akin, God will deceive you, I promise you. God will deceive you the way you are deceiving me.' ...*

*....He shut the door and I watched him through the glass panes. He was all wrong. Instead of holding his briefcase in his hand, he gripped it to his side with his left arm...(p.28)*

The quotation above shows his treatment to his wife become arrogant. He ignores to listen to her whine. The setting refers to the arrogant attitude. The wife starts to talk with face to face him without any obstacle that will influence him. The question *'You are deceiving me, abi?'* means the wife asks him about her existence in her husband's life. He does not care about his wife because he knows that he just needs her as an object. The internal conflict becomes more serious. He feels confused between love and his egoism. It influences his mental anxiety according to his marriage condition than his power of domination. The word "I" refers to his wife's sadness to follow up her husband's choice. He feels like a stranger towards his wife. The utterance *'Akin, God will deceive you, I promise you. God will*

*deceive you the way you are deceiving me.* Shows his wife was full of anger in her mind. These might not be change the character's attitude, however he still ignored his wife for the condition happened. He have to show to his family that he has power and cannot be stopped by a woman.

The authority can be seen to his brother's life. He takes control his brother's life with his financial advantages. The passion for obtaining masculinity makes him become over act. Furthermore, he tend to use his money to get recognition from society. It can be seen in the following quotation :

*...Dotun lost his job in Lagos and moved in with us....*

*..... The truth was that he had lost his job a year before coming to us and spent his savings on setting up a bakery that failed within a few months. He tried to get another job after that, but the only openings he could find were for security guards or messengers positions he did not take because with his MBA he felt over-qualified....(p.108)*

The quotation above shows that the setting is the bankruptcy of his brother. He gives his brother the better life to control him. The condition means someone will do anything with another when he need to life comfortable. The utterance *lost his job* refers to bad situation that can be used by the first character to show his power towards society. It caused his life will be easy to prove his masculinity. He begins with his brother's life because he has much money to take oppression to another man that he feels better than himself. The utterance *failed within a few months* means his brother deeply frustated to continue his life. Hence, the first character save his brother's life with his own money. That seems the first character giving his hand to brag himself. The internal conflict within him is the first character feel arrogant to his brother because he felt he could stand alone and even provide a decent life for others. The utterance *he did not take because with his MBA he felt over-qualified* shows that the vanity of his brother would be a weapon to attack himself even his life can be controlled with someone who has advantages than himself. It gives an opportunities to the first character to mantain his authority.

The first character feels like over power through his brother and his wife. He does anything because he can control them by his financial advantages. He can cover his weakness uses his money. It can be seen in the following qoutation :

*For years, she didn't talk about Juwon, and appeared to have lost interest in his life until she wanted me to marry another wife. Then she told me, as if I*



*didn't already know, that Juwon already had four children, all boys. This time she didn't stop with Juwon but reminded me that all my half-brothers now had children.*(p.20)

The quotation above shows that his weakness was appear because his mother always been compared him with his step brother. He feels motivated to marry and get a child. The setting refers to the preasure. His obsession to get a child makes him become over sensitive towards his mother's need. The utterance *four children, all boys* means that he must give his desendences, and it should be "men". In his culture, men are very prestigious. He will take his family name to his generation and the family pride. The utterance *my half-brothers now had children* shows that he have to defeated his step brother to show his authority towards his big family. It caused him become arrogant to obtain masculinity.

The first character does the cunning action to obtain masculinity. This strategy is created by him. He sets a mission to get a child by paying his brother. It can be seen from the following quotation :

*'I'm not asking you to rape her, damn it. Just once, get her pregnant and that's it. I've told you my problem. Do you want me to beg?' 'It is an abomination. She is your wife. Shit. Your wife, you want me to sleep with my brother's wife? My elder brother's wife? No, I can't, there has to be another way.'* *'Dotun, you are the only person I can come to. You are the only brother I have. Do you want me to call a stranger?'*.....

*'So she gets pregnant. Won't you want another child?' 'If we arrange things well, one weekend will*

*do for each child. All things being equal, three kids are OK...*(p.130-131)

The quotation above shows that the first character force his brother to adultery with his wife. He managed the drama to get a children and claimed as his child. The internal conflict is from the first character. He feel embarrassed to admit his weakness to his brother. Setting here refers to the seriousness. He does not want the society claims him as a useless people. The word *pregnant* is the problem in the first charater. He cannot gets his wife pregnant, in fact his brother is different from him. He has an advantages as a man by his appearance. The utterance *All things being equal, three kids are OK* means he shows his family position to deal his brother of the mission to control his wife. The cunning ways from the first character intended to reach masculinity by his money politic. The

utterance *Won't you want another child?* means this situation will continue until he becomes successful to obtain masculinity.

Another quotation of the character's mission to get a child by paying his brother can be seen from the quotation below :

*'We had an argument about money,' Dotun said.*

*'It was not a business; if you were not so stupid you would have known they were fraudsters. Wouldn't we all be rich if money doublers really existed?' 'Money is a tiny thing,' Akin's father said, tapping Dotun on the shoulder. Akin and Dotun kept weaving the strands of their lies until their story was as strong as a rope of truth.(p.160)*

The quotation above shows that he pays his brother to run his underhanded action towards his wife. The internal conflict is increasing. His concept of money politics can cover his weakness through his family member as a useless man. He could not produce children as a husband in the country's provision. He has to manipulate his wife and his big family by using his money. The word "money" refers to his advantages to obtain masculinity. Money will raise the pride of him. The weakness will not be seen through his society. The utterance *'Money is a tiny thing,'* means every man in that country concerns about how to reach their needs even if by doing crime. They bluntly abuse women to reach their goal. It is the concept of patriarchy, the men must sacrifice anything to achieve their masculinity. He could not reach masculinity, however he uses his money to obtain masculinity. He does not matter makes the women as a victim, but he knows that his weakness leads him as the real victim of their own rule.

In summary, the financial advantages are the essential things that influence the first character's life. The negative attitude toward his wife and brother is the way to obtain masculinity. The dominant settings here refer to the patriarchal society. The patriarchal society and rules create the external conflicts which influence his internal conflict. Being obsessed to get domination over society brings him to do the cunning way with his position and money. The external and internal conflict within him influence his attitude to attain masculinity. It can be seen through the way he takes opportunities towards others. His ambition to obtain masculinity makes him become careless with his wife. He sets a mission just to have children. He never left his wife because he wanted the society to know that he is masculine. He hides his weakness without feeling guilty to them. He becomes a victim with his own rule because he imposes himself to obtain masculinity.

## **2. The Second Character**

This topic focuses on discussing about the effort of the first character to obtain masculinity. To get masculinity, the second character uses his strategy by his physical superiority. He sells his appearance to get money by his physical

superiority. He takes advantage of opportunities for the weakness of his brother. He hides someone's crime for money. He makes woman as an object.

The second character uses his physical superiority to maintain his authority is the first strategy to show his domination by himself. He feels overpower than his brother because he has a good appearance as a man in patriarchal society. It can be seen from the following quotation :

*'I may be going to Lagos next weekend,' I said. 'What are you going to do in Lagos?' 'I need to see Dotun about some investments.' 'Dotun and investments? Just be careful with your brother; sometimes I think he is nothing but trouble.' She was wrong about being pregnant, but she was right about Dotun.(p.40)*

The quotation above shows that he is a troublemaker. He had his position as a brother of the first character. He comes to take a benefit of his brother's awarness. The setting refers to awarness. He would be a threat of his brother and his family. The internal conflict is the condition of the first character who want to save his marriage. The uterrance *Dotun and investments* means he has the opportunities towards his brother. Investment here refers to his planning to obtain masculinity. He does anything with just to get money. He knows that his brother are weak because his brother cannot get her wife's pregnant. The word *nothing but trouble* shows the fact that his condition as unemployment will take him to do a cunning action through his brother.

The second character takes advantage of opportunities for the weakness of his brother. It can be seen from following quotation :

*'I did not like my brother-in-law, but then I was married to Akin and Dotun came as part of the package. Whenever Dotun came to visit, I was glad that he lived in Lagos and his visits were spaced out enough to give me breathing room. He was always telling all sorts of strange jokes that were not funny at all. He laughed so loudly, too loudly, at his own mirthless jokes. It was tiring to be around him; I always had to laugh at things that were not funny. I also had to figure out when I was supposed to laugh, as his jokes had no detectable punchline. He was not a man to be taken seriously, amidst all that laughter, he made many promises – promises he would never keep.*

*Dotun had promised us a child once; he'd said he would send one of his sons to live with us until I conceived'....(p.73)*

The quotation above shows that he is an entertainer, he was not a serious person than his brother. He does not think that life was complicated. He never try to take anything seriously. The setting refers to opportunities. His brother believes that he is a trustworthy person. The internal conflict is he knows that his brother's marriage was incoherent. He take a part as a good man to help his brother's life. The utterance *he made many promises* means that he can help anything that his brother's need. He has his own skill that will be an income to himself. He can shows to the society his masculinity especially to his brother. The utterance *Dotun had promised us a child once; he'd said he would send one of his sons to live with us until I conceived*' shows that his brother almost dependent his life to him. He is unemployed, it will easy to manage his brother with his hands.

The character's obtaining masculinity is hides someone's crime for money. He tells to his daughter in-law that he does not know his brother's cunning way to his wife's. He blames each other because he does not want th woman left him. It can be seen from following quotation :

*'Wait, Yejide. Me?' He jabbed his chest with a finger. 'You are angry with me?' 'Keep your voice down.' He shook his head. 'It is not my fault, you know, Yejide. It was all his idea.' 'Dotun, you and your brother conspired against me.'*(p.163)

The quotation above shows that his action towards his daughter in-law was humiliated women. He must get forgiveness from that woman, because he does not want his mission will fail. He just thinking about money and domination. He does a crime towards her to get money. Setting refers to felling regret. He is serious to get the trust of her. The internal conflict is he does not wan his mission to get money will be canceled. The character uses his ability to beg woman when he get caught from his cunning. The utterance *You are angry with me?* means he need to know his possibility still available. He does not care about her felling. He only think to continue his palns. The word *conspired* shows that his cunning way to cover his brother's mission towards his daughter in-law. His brother has the console and he is the actor.

The character makes a woman as an object to obtain his masculinity. He only know that the women are weak. He can do anything to the women without feeling guilty. He must does not care about woman's felling. The purpose are he want to get money. It can be seen in the quotation below.

*'He whispered my name, Yejide, Yejide. It was so soft on his lips, an exotic sound that was a caress in itself. I wanted him to know what I could not say, that my baby, the pregnancy I had nursed, was gone. Go away.. He kissed my face until I started moaning his name instead.'*(p.74)



The quotation above shows that he harassed his daughter-in-law to operate his mission. He wants his daughter-in-law satisfy his lust. Setting refers to coercion. He commits immoral act towards woman. He does not care his position as brother-in-law. The internal conflict is he could not stop his ambition to get his brother's wife. The utterance *an exotic sound* shows that he is a bad man who wanted to abuse woman. Not only money that he need but also biological satisfying. He takes brother's trust to show his power towards women. The utterance *Go away...* means he does not gives her opportunities to run. He follows his lust and makes her helpless. This condition shows that he oppressed woman belongs to him. He only knows that women as an object.

Another quotation shows that he makes women as an object can be seen in the following quotation.

*'The house was not big enough to keep us from running into each other. We were having breakfast on Saturday when he reached across to push hair out of my face, then he touched my ear and did not let go. It was not quick and furtive like the first time; he did not finish too soon. I felt guilty enough to stay away from him for the rest of the weekend and I promised myself that it would never happen again. 'I always think about that weekend,' Dotun said'....(p.109)*

The quotation below shows that he become dominant towards his daughter-in-law. He has strong than women. He can do anything towards her. When he has a chance, he will not wasting that time. Setting refers to strenghtened. He has done the first action. He needs more action to get his masculinity. He is a perfect man he think. He become over act to follow this certain criteria towards women. The internal conflict here is he not ashamed to do an immoral attitude because he does not care about women. The utterance *he touched my ear and did not let go...* means that he is very insolent to destroy woman's self esteem. The utterance *never happen again* shows that his treatments make woman become depressed to think about what was happen to her. The utterance *'I always think about that weekend,' Dotun said'....* means that he will do it again and again until his mission successful. To obtain masculinity, he think that he must oppress woman because they cannot resist his underhanded action. Women are weak in his view. He takes them as victims to show his authority.

In summary, the physical superiority is the essential thing that influences the first character life. The negative attitude toward his daughter-in-law and brother is the way to obtain masculinity. The dominant settings here refers to the patriarchal society. The patriarchal society and rules create the external conflicts which is influence his internal conflict. Being obsession to get domination over society bring him to do the cunning way with his physical superiority. The external and internal conflict within him influence his attitude to attain masculinity. It can be

seen through the way he take opportunities towards others. His ambition to obtain masculinity him becomes careless with women. He has deals just to get money. He never felling guilty towards women because he wanted the society knows that he is masculine. He hides He takes advantage of opportunities for the weakness of his brother. He hides someone's crime for money. His selfishness to obtain masculinity bring him as a victim even he cannot fulfill the patriarchal rule.

### C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The masculinity is the essential thing that influences the characters life. The negative attitude toward others influences his social life and family. The dominant settings here refers to the patriarchal society. The external conflicts being left by many people that they dominated. The internal conflict can be seen through the way they achieve masculinity. The character's behavior comes from his attitude. Attitude and behavior connected to each others. The character behavior shows that he does not trust other. The dominant setting refers to the anger and hatred feeling of the character. He does not trust anybody and he suffers from mental problem called inability to trust people. It makes him becomes lack of socializing. He does not have many friends. He could not focus on his career and future plan. He even does not trust anybody to tell his problems. His internal conflict become harder, and it makes him suffers. Inability to trust people makes him act unusual than other people. He does not have many friends and tends to spend his time on his own. Basicly, everyone children deserve the right love, attention and affection from others. Without these people could lost their trust to others and have a mental problem. It makes them isolated themself and difficult to trust others. That way parents should give the right love and attention to their kids since they were born because it determine and influence their children life and future.

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