"YOU ARE NOT A WOMAN": DISPOSABLE MOTHERS AND THE CLANDESTINE BABY FACTORIES IN NIGERIA

Irene Agunloye

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“YOU ARE NOT A WOMAN”: DISPOSABLE MOTHERS AND THE CLANDESTINE BABY FACTORIES IN NIGERIA

by

IRENE AGUNLOYE

Under the Direction of Megan Sinnott PhD

ABSTRACT

My thesis “‘You are not a Woman”: Disposable Mothers and The Clandestine Baby Factory in Nigeria”, seeks to address the exclusion and marginalization of infertile (barren) women, their experiences and voices from the ‘cult of motherhood’. The thesis is also a rallying cry for education, sensitization and action against the clandestine baby factories in Nigeria. Consequently, a screenplay is used to narrate an authentic account of this on-going assault on young unsuspecting women, bringing to light the driving force behind baby factories. In future, this screenplay will be filmed and used for advocacy to conscientize the general public (communities, government agencies, media practioners, churches, traditional rulers, and students.) on the negative implications of forced motherhood both on the women and their babies. The intention is to bring about the desired change in the demand-chain of this business.

INDEX WORDS: Baby Factory, Infertility, Disposable womb, woman, Clandestine
“YOU ARE NOT A WOMAN”: DISPOSABLE MOTHERS AND THE CLANDESTINE
BABY FACTORIES IN NIGERIA

by

IRENE AGUNLOYE

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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“YOU ARE NOT A WOMAN”: DISPOSABLE MOTHERS AND THE CLANDESTINE BABY FACTORIES IN NIGERIA

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children, grandchildren and my husband.
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I greatly appreciate my committee Chair Dr. Megan Sinnott and members of my Thesis Committee, Dr. Tiffany King and Dr Chamara Jewel Kwakye for their contributions and valuable feedback.
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This thesis “‘You are not a Woman”: Disposable Mothers and The Clandestine Baby Factory in Nigeria”, addresses the exclusion and marginalization of infertile (barren) women, their experiences and voices from the ‘cult of motherhood’. The thesis is also a rallying cry for education, sensitization and action against the clandestine baby factories in Nigeria. In this regard, it is written as a screen play, which can be adapted for stage, that will give a powerful and authentic account of this on-going assault on young unsuspecting women, bringing to light the driving force behind baby factories. Baby factory is a relatively new and evolving phenomenon which involves multiple participants. It is fast becoming a thriving business because of the high demand by desperate clients and huge profit derived from it. There are semblances of baby factories in different parts of the world, developed and developing, however, because of their clandestine nature, they are not easily accessible or identified. These outfits may not be structured or operate like the Nigerian baby factories, but in many instances, money is paid for babies produced by someone else.

In future, the screen play will be filmed, or excepts from it can be staged and used for advocacy to conscientize the general public (communities, government agencies, media practitioners, churches, traditional rulers, and students.) on the negative implications of forced motherhood both on the women and their babies, with the intention of bringing about the desired change in the demand chain of this business.

Using plays by Nigerian women playwrights, the thesis interrogates issues arising from motherhood/barrenness and explains what constitutes femininity in Nigerian culture, in other to
understand the reproductive cultural pressure on Nigerian women. This pressure has created the demand for baby factories and baby ‘producers’.

In the thesis, the following questions are answered: What constitute femininity in Nigerian culture? What is the nature and extent of the rising phenomena of baby factory in Nigeria? What are the factors responsible for the emergence of baby factories in Nigeria? How effective has the media, both local and international been in dissemination of useful information and educating the society on baby factories? What are the most effective or context specific tools for building awareness of baby factories?

There are several reasons responsible for the choice of this project. Three of these will be discussed here: one, I have friends who have had problems with conception, their travails as they go from one herbalist clinic to prayer house, and from one fertility clinic to another, (some are fake, and may compound their problems), has been a source of concern to me. Many Nigerian churches are populated with women who are seeking for the ‘fruit of the womb’. There are weekly programs for ‘mothers of nations’, prophetically asserting that the women will become mothers of many nations, as the Bible, says to call those things that be not as though they were. Some Sundays are tagged ‘Divine Fruitfulness Day’ when ‘mothers in waiting’ as ‘infertile’ women are called in the church, are anointed so that they can become fruitful or pregnant. Although the Bible says “NONE shall be barren in the land…”, (Ex.23:26) many Nigerian churches still consider infertility women’s problem, and so they focus their prayers on them. These women are always ready to make any sacrifice or pay any price to experience pregnancy and the joy of motherhood, so that they can meet up with the normative cultural standard, which in Nigeria is for every woman to have a child.
In Nigeria, which is mainly heteropatriarchal, childlessness and infertility does not provide legitimate subject positions. A normalized family is a nuclear family, made up of father, mother and children. Childlessness confers a genderless status. The only available mode of subjectivation for a woman is “motherhood”. Since female subject is constructed as fulfilled only through motherhood, it further reinforces the precarization of infertile women due to the lack of recognition. Infertile women make extra effort to normalize themselves and thus adopt subjectivities provided by power. They tend to present themselves as very “normal” women and especially fit for “motherhood.

The second reason, is an incident which I read in an article from a national daily newspaper in March 2017, where a young adult girl claimed to have given up her baby at the baby factory so she could get money to buy a fifty-kilogram bag of rice for her siblings as both her parents are dead! This story touched me, and I kept imagining the trauma that accompanied this action. This made me search extensively for more information on baby factory. My search revealed that baby factories as the name implies, is a “factory” – a black market where young women are held captive often against their will and forced to produce babies for sale or trafficking. They are organized and a highly coordinated chain of criminal business activity carried out with brutal efficiency. They operate clandestinely under various disguises, as an illegal shelter that harbors young women. The term “baby factory” is said to have been coined by journalists to describe the commercial network of activities (in Nigeria) that involves the deceitful and/or forceful acquisition of teenage girls or unmarried pregnant young women, who are confined and restricted from moving, often against their will. In the factories they are sexually abused/exploited and encouraged or forced to become pregnant.
The factory operators trade in babies as well as the unlawful adoption of babies (Huntley, 2013:10). They are put under cover right from the sign posts and names, and thus disguised as Herbal Clinics, Hospital and Maternity Homes, Orphanages/Motherless Babies Homes, Social Welfare Homes, Faith Based Organizations, Sachet Water (popularly known as Pure Water) Factory and even Non-Governmental Organizations (Ele, 2016:13-14). Although they are often disguised as homes for orphans and sometimes appear as churches as well as charity homes, going by their names, they however function clandestinely. It has become the last avenue for infertile mothers to realize their dream of motherhood.

The operation of baby factories is structured around some basic principles. The baby producers for the factories are recruited by brokers who target poor, uneducated, rural young women who subsequently are disciplined into submission, accepting their roles as ‘perfect mothers’ “for national and international clients” (Pande, 2010:975). Sometimes young girls—who are not pregnant – go to the factories willingly (yet through deception) or forcefully (often through kidnapping) to be impregnated by men who function either as employees or associates of operators of baby factories. These girls are then kept in an enclosure which in many ways can be likened to a prison where they become a docile bodies, to be disciplined and subjugated (emotionally, mentally and sometimes physically). They remain there until the day they give birth and the babies, afterwards, are sold to willing buyers.

Women’s desperation and patronage of the factory is due to the stigmatization of childless couples in Nigeria, and issues around the cultural acceptability of surrogacy and adoption. This desperation has led to an increase in the demand for babies, and this, in addition to other factors such as derivable financial benefits, have contributed to the growth in the industry which results in physical, psychological, and sexual violence to the victims.
The socio-ethical concerns regarding exploitation in baby factory business are premised on asymmetric vulnerability, the commercialization of women’s reproductive capacity to suit individualistic motives (Makinde:2016) and the colonization of the female body. Poverty, school drop-out, and ignorance in many dimensions seem to be the major reasons why the teenage girls who are victims of these factories succumb to the pressure of producing babies for the baby factories. The babies are innocent victims, ignorant of the predisposing conditions in their new world.

The third reason for this study, in addition to all the above, is based on a documentary films on ‘Baby Factory’ which I watched on Al Jazeera Satellite Cable Network, Africa Independent Television (AIT) and Channels Television of Nigeria. These films, shows the transformation of the disposable young mothers, some of them as young as fourteen years, from worth to worthlessness, laboring bodies, under poor conditions, and becoming an “embodied site of exploitation and accumulation” (Scott, 1999).

The thesis draws attention to how the syndicate involved in the baby factories exploit both the biological mother and the intending mother. I argue that the baby, the ‘surrogate’ mothers and intending mothers (infertile mothers) are exploited in the entire process. This project is approached using Dwight Conquergood’s Performance Studies’ methodology, based on its ability to open spaces between analysis and action. In this regard, this project proposes the use of Entertainment Education (EE) and Theater for Development (TfD) principles which are suitable methods and are also aspects of performance studies in which knowledge is anchored on practice and community participation to be used for advocacy against baby factories in future.
1.2 Purpose of Project

This project highlights and further draw critical attention to the clandestine baby factory business as the latest nightmare in Nigeria, and the screen play written for the project is essentially for advocacy and awareness creation. While looking at the serious negative implications of baby factories on the health and well-being of the victims who are mainly women and babies, the project shows the plight of young girls who as victims are the “machines” producing the babies. Attention is also drawn to the babies (children) who are commodified and sold to infertile couples, in order make the society conscious of the business so that policy makers will expedite action in this regard. Considering the aforementioned, the followings are the objectives of the project:

i. To fully understand what “baby factory” as a new dimension of human trafficking is generally about.

ii. To examine the nature and extent of the rising phenomenon of baby factory in Nigeria.

iii. To determine the factors responsible for baby factories in Nigeria.

iv. To examine the victimization of women in baby factories and also the commodification of babies (children).

v. To analyze media coverage/reportage on baby factories in Nigeria.

vi. To propose possible ways of curbing the prevalence of baby factories business’ in Nigeria using action-based education tool such as plays (for screen/stage).

1.3 Statement of Problem

The phenomenon of baby factory in Nigeria, although relatively new, is obviously the latest human trafficking trend and concern, flourishing or gradually gaining ground as a big
enterprise in different parts of the country especially in the South-eastern states. The United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) refers to baby factories as “baby harvesting” and officially reported the first case in 2006 in its policy document entitled Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Root Causes and Recommendations with specific reference to three states in Nigeria namely Abia, Ebonyi and Lagos. However, as pointed out by Huntley (2013:2), those cases of baby factory or baby harvesting as the UNESCO policy paper refers to it did not evidence exploitation of persons and would more likely be categorized as the sale of infants or illegal adoptions. This possibly could be because at the early stage of what is now known as baby factory, the practice was not very pronounced to warrant any serious investigation aimed at ascertaining its true nature. As a result, without paying attention to the ways in which these children are gotten for merchandise, the practice was merely described as an avenue for the adoption and/or sales of children.

Today, the phenomenon of baby factory appears to be growing and assuming a more dangerous and complex forms involving human trafficking along with other illegal activities (Huntley, 2013:1). The existence of baby factories across the country translates into the perpetration and occurrence of illegitimate activities such as baby breeding, rape, forced impregnations, sale of babies, illegal adoptions and even human trafficking (Makinde et al: 2015). Baby factories, thus, constitute a place where violence against women who have fallen victims either willingly but ignorant of the implication or forcefully, is perpetuated. While some of these women are being deceived and lured into baby factories without necessarily coercing them, others are kidnapped and plunged into this enslavement. In most cases, kidnappers subject these women to sexual, physical and psychological violence. But whatever the case may be as regards the mode of entry or how these women are acquired and held up in baby factories, it
ultimately turns out that they are enslaved (against their wishes) for months till the day they eventually give birth. After this, the babies are taken away from them with or without force to be sold and/or trafficked. (8)

1.4. Project Questions

The project addresses the following questions:

1. What constitute femininity in Nigerian culture?

2. What is the nature and extent of the rising phenomenon of baby factory in Nigeria?

3. What are the factors responsible for baby factories in Nigeria?

4. How effective has the media, both local and international been in dissemination useful information and educating the society on baby factories?

5. What are more effective or context specific tools for building awareness?

1.5. Significance of the Project

With all the controversies surrounding baby factories, there are very limited scholarly articles in this relatively new field till date, it could be because of its clandestine and complex nature. This project is therefore significant in increasing the existing body of knowledge about baby factory and, beyond that, providing new innovative creative vista on the subject— through the production of screenplay – as way of raising public consciousness.

In a world and time when feminist activism towards the liberation of women from every form of oppression and victimization has gathered momentum and there is a global outcry and clamor for the empowerment of women, this project will be of utmost significance as an avenue for drawing the attention of human rights activists, policy makers, the academia, government ministries/agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and other relevant stakeholders to the
plight of women in baby factories across the country. Thereby, serving an advocacy purpose aimed at the emancipation of women from the perpetrators and syndicates of these baby factories. Finally, the project will serve as reference material for students and other scholars and be the basis for further research into the phenomenon of baby factory in Nigeria, in Africa or any other part of the world.
2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As a result of the evolving nature of baby factory, literature on it is still limited. It is only in the last three years, that a gradual increase in the amount of literature on the baby factory in Nigeria is beginning to emerge. However, most of them are newspaper/magazine articles, television news clips, and documentary films. This implies that there are limited critical works on baby factories. There are no thesis that used creative writing; there probably may be a few that are not easily accessible by the library network. It is hoped that this thesis as a creative work will offer an innovative model to alleviate the problem of baby factories and fill the vacuum created by dearth of texts in this area. The project will also add to the growing body of literature that places reproductive choices in the ‘center’. This thesis accessed resources from Nigerian daily newspapers, documentary films from Al Jazeera Satellite Cable Network, African Independent Television and Channels Television in Nigeria and critical texts in field of motherhood and baby factory.

The thesis also engages literary works, mainly by Nigerian women, that open alternative spaces for ‘infertile’ women to reclaim their subjectivity; in doing this they reconstruct the dominant narratives of motherhood. There is an increasing body of literature on motherhood, Discussing motherhood, Susan Suleiman in her book, Subversive Intent, (1990) investigates the relationship between playing mother and motherhood in avant-garde theatre, Jessica Benjamin (Bonds of Love:1988 and “The Omnipotent Mother”:1994) offers a very distinctive post-Lacania perspective on motherhood, exploring the problem of dominance and formation of identity. Ann Kaplan has written on maternal subjectivity in her book Motherhood and Representation (1992), and Nicole Loraux wrote condemning the mourning mothers’ voices in ancient city state in Mothers in Mourning (1998). Adrienne Rich (1976) in her book Of Woman Born: Motherhood
as *Experience and Institution*, making a clear distinction between motherhood as an institution and motherhood as an experience, argues that patriarchy has constructed the institution of motherhood while mothers experience it. Motherhood as an institution she argues "aims at ensuring that that potential—and all women—shall remain under male control" (13). The institution of motherhood thus, mandates women to be the exclusive caretakers of children. As such, the ideology negates other attributes of women, restricting her solely to the confines of motherhood. Nancy Chodorow in *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) and *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (1989) sets out key explanatory frameworks for motherhood and explores the social ramification of the idea of women as only mothers. Most of the available references are speaking from a Euro-American perspective which does not quite fit into Nigerian reality of life. That is why Oyeronke Oyewumi (2014) argues in her text on “Family Beyond/Conceptual Binds: African Notes on Feminist Epistemologies”, that the Western conception of society by Anthropologist and Sociologists should not be applied cross-culturally. In *What Gender is Motherhood? Changing Yoruba Ideals of Power, Procreation, and Identity in the Age of Modernity*, Oyeronke Oyewumi (2016) maintains that the dominance of the west threatens to obliterate matrpotent values, institutions, and episteme. (211) There are also other writers like bell hooks *From Margin to Centre and Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, Patricia Hills Collins’ *Black Feminist Thought* and Dorothy Roberts’ (1998) *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction and the Meaning of Liberty*. Jeanne Flavin (2009) in *Our Bodies, Our Crime: The Policing of Women’s Reproduction in America*, discusses how the criminal justice systems encroach on women’s reproductive rights, and thus determine who has right to be a mother and to uphold socially constructed norms of motherhood. These theorists commend the struggles and commitment of black mothers to their families, they move for the
honoring of black maternal sacrifice considering how they have been exploited, devalued and 
humiliated. Patricia Collins, a black feminist sociologist has contributed to the study of black 
motherhood in her works, *Black Feminist Thought* (1990) and successive essays, “The Meaning 
of Motherhood in Black Culture and Black Mother-Daughter Relationships” (1991) and 
“Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing about Motherhood” (1994), where 
she presents her theory of black motherhood. This she contextualizes within the framework of 
experiences of black women’s gender, race, and class oppression. Positioning her work as a 
scholarly and political intervention into sociological research and political discourse, Collins 
argues that black motherhood draws upon West African traditions that value mothers, their work, 
and shared caring responsibilities amongst women-centered networks of bloodmothers, 
othermothers, and community othermothers (132). She articulates the sacrificial nature, 
commitment and struggles of black motherhood, and like hooks, asking for her to be honored. 
Although I agree that these texts provide useful interventions, but like Candice Meritts (2018) 
says, “they speak back to the dominant stereotype of black women…” (23) They stress the role 
of mothers as committed, self-sacrificing, acknowledging their maternal sacrifice. In nearly all 
their writings, they are silent on the issue of black women’s resistance to reproduction. Here, 
Meritts ask that these black feminist theorists begin to confront instances of mothers who lack 
desire to rear “… like myself, at the beginning of the new millennium…” rather than see it as a 
taboo (4). Thus, she argues that black motherhood is an ambivalent site for some black women, 
and it can also be a site of joy and displeasure; sacrifice and refusal; life and death (2). Here 
Meritts draw our attention to another type of motherhood, mothers who opt out of mother-child 
bond, who express negative feelings or acts towards children, they fail to love. They are far from 
the normative mold of motherhood as they represent difference—an otherness that we
would rather repress, deny, or silent. Often these mothers are castigated by many, who avoid them, regarded as orish/horrific (4). Meritts uses the metaphor of monstrosity in her reference to these ambivalent black mothers. For her, this metaphor expresses her personal feelings and experience which she has muted for:

I dare not speak prior to this project and provides a queer entry point to think through the unnatural and immoral designations of black motherhood beyond interpretive frames that consider the qualities as pathological or untrue. Monsters are non-normative creatures—they can tell us a thing or two about ourselves and our world. The non-mother, the absent mother, and the abandoning mother (5)

Merrits monstrous mother may not be a normative mode of motherhood in Nigeria, however, her emphasis on the subordination of women by the institution of motherhood as dictated by patriarchy and the need for liberty in motherhood is a point this project agrees with and explores.

Dorothy Robert has asked for a critical intervention that will instigate reproductive liberty. Roberts work has been accused of not rethinking motherhood as a problematic institution and an imposition on the bodies of black women (42). However, in this thesis, the preoccupation is with motherhood from the perspective of the infertile women and women who do not have desires to be mothers (this category is very rare in Nigeria). The thesis proposes that Nigerian Mothering opens exploitative and oppressive sites for women.

In *Wombs in Labor: Transnational Commercial Surrogacy in India* (2014), and “Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother-Worker” (2010) Amarita Pande (2014) contributes to the increasing literature on commercial surrogacy, she examines how the transnational labor market opened by surrogacy which connects the global south with
the global north. In the book, she problematizes the dynamics of power imposed by a country like India that has a history of sterilizing poor women but at the same time opens her door to medical tourism. In this in-depth ethnographic study, Pande narrates a detailed nuance and grounded story on how “a labor market for womb is created and how laborers experience the market” (971). She draws attention also to the exploitative aspects of surrogacy and how this intersect with race, class and nationality. The initiation of women into surrogacy, the subsequent impregnation, undue medical surveillance of surrogacy and the disciplinary process of becoming a perfect “mother-worker” fit for the ‘business’ and the giving up of the child at birth enrich her ethnography. In an anthropological analysis, she positions the womb both as contractual and disposable components within gestational trajectory, demonstrating the transience of the surrogate’s identity as a worker. At the end, Pander ask if this labor really help to improve the lives of the surrogates.

2.1 Motherhood and Barrenness in the Nigerian Context

Motherhood in African societies cannot be discussed without drawing attention to the instrumental role of patriarchy which fixes women socially as insignificant and submissive femininity. Adrienne Rich (1976) asserts that patriarchy as an institution oppresses women, brings woman under the control of a man, regulating women’s reproduction and motherhood. Although patriarchy does not have a defined physical structure, but as a historical and ideological practice, it has law, policy and culture. (23)

Based on this argument, attention is drawn to the patriarchal notion of barrenness which for generations has led to women’s demonization and profound othering. In doing this, the thesis builds on Kate Millett’s feminist theory of sexual politics in order to shed light on issues that disempower women and thus make them invisible in Nigerian community. Roles given to
women, depiction of women’s lives and why there are certain configurations of femininity will be examined. In the context of this thesis, Millet’s (2000) explanation of the word politics as power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another is adopted. Millet, embedding this in the ambiance of patriarchy, asserts that sex is a status category with political implications. She proceeds to explain that it is because certain groups have no representation in several political structures that their position tends to be so stable, their oppression so continuous. In line with this, an investigation of the gender power relations would reveal a phenomenon defined by Max Weber as herrschaft, a relationship of dominance and subordinance which though unnoticed, is institutionalized in societal social order, “in the birthright priority where by males rule females” (25). Millett term this form “inferior colonization”. She defines patriarchal government as an institution whereby one half of the populace dominates and controls another half which is female. Sexual politics gains ascendancy through the “socialization of both sexes to basic patriarchal politics with reference to temperament, role and status. Status guarantees superior in male and an inferior status in the female.

The dominant group therefore adopts a higher status, and adopts the roles of mastery, and encouraged to develop temperaments of dominance. In support of this, bell hooks (1981) stresses that the black male quest for his 'manhood' is rooted in his internalization of the myth that simply having been born male he has an inherent right to power and privilege. This is well captured in Adriene Rich’s definition of patriarchy as "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension, of male dominance over women in society in general” (1986).
Patriarchy is often presumed to be endemic in human social life; this belief bequeaths patriarchy with logical as well as historical origin. Traditionally, patriarchy bestows the father nearly total ownership of the wife, or wives and children, with the powers of physical and psychological abuse (33). Thus, gender relationship in patriarchy bestows on the female (the weaker) a chattel status, which results in her giving up her name, her paternal domicile and accepts her husband’s. Patriarchy denotes that the status of both the child and mother is largely or ultimately dependent on the father and husband or any male significant other. Women’s dependency is parasitic and as such they rely only on the surplus from the master’s table. Their marginal and subjective position make them identify with their provider for survival. Many never contemplate the idea of seeking a radical liberation from their situation; they rather maintain the status quo until they are conscientized about their situation. Our world is often regarded as from a male world, and they have shaped and designed the culture with regards to women.

The female image as it is, is designed by men, and created to suit their needs, needs which arise from fear of the “otherness” of women. “Yet this notion itself presupposes that patriarchy has already been established and the male has already set himself as the human norm, the subject and referent to which the female is other or alien” (46). Psychologically, women interiorize the lower status accorded her by patriarchal ideology, particularly in marriage; this is reinforced by the male superior economic position, and the female inferior one. In patriarchy, the huge amount of guilt is overwhelmingly blamed on the female “who culturally speaking, is held to be culpable or the more culpable party in nearly any sexual liaisons” (54). This is particularly so considering her chattel status, denied her rights and privileges. The woman is perpetually monitored, she must seek approval for her survival or any time she wants to make progress from the man who holds the rod of authority and power. In most cases, the only way she can gain
approval is by appeasement or by offering her body to the man for supports and a raise in status, since she is a marginal citizen.

Although these definitions and explanations stand true, it is good to mention here that to a large extent, in Nigeria, in many instances, the ‘barren’ woman is more oppressed by women than men. This is why Obioma Nnemeka (1997) asserts that this is often the outcome of institutionalized, hierarchical female spaces that make women victims and collaborators in patriarchal violence (27). A sociological explanation for women oppressing one another can be explained thus: the psychology of the oppressed where the oppressed social categories whether racial, ethnic, gender or class turn on one another because of the small political space they are squeezed into and must compete in.

In the psychology of the oppressed, self-loathing-what you abhor in yourself, you project to others and hate them for it. The limitation women set for themselves as part of a “lower class” they also set for others and therefore feel offended when they rise above that level, hence pull-her-down-syndrome (Agunloye:2009). Therefore, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi (1996) asks that woman to woman oppression be taken into consideration in defining African feminism or womanism. It is in the light of this theoretical framework that this thesis explores motherhood, infertility and baby factory, and investigates the reconstruction of the new womanhood in Nigerian literary texts as against the patriarchal construct, which frustrates the childless woman. The central claim is that their reconstruction involves a radical dismantling of the phallocentric male codes.

Ideologically feminists present motherhood as a site of oppression. The premise of feminism is that women are oppressed as women, wives and as mother. In Nigeria, there is a gender division of roles and labor, and women’s space is clearly demarcated from men. This
ideology of separate spheres for men and women reinforces women's commitment to motherhood within the realm of patriarchy (Roberts, 1993). In this arrangement, the husband sustains the family economically and represents the family in the public sphere; the wife is responsible for the private/domestic sphere. This clear demarcation creates a space for women, giving her some measure of authority and importance in the home, while maintaining male dominance over women (24). This gendered division of labor in Nigerian society continues to be an aspect of women's subordination. The “cult of domesticity” according to Dorothy Roberts, legitimizes the confinement of women to the private sphere by portraying women as naturally suited for motherhood and naturally unfit for public life. (25) It is impossible to think of what it means to be a woman without thinking in terms of the ability to have children. Here, I identify with Simone de Beauvoir's (2010) words: “one is born, but rather becomes a woman”, this implies that gender is constructed through a social process, although we are biologically born male or female. Thus, the performance of gender role as a mother of children is what establishes one’s gender. Women who bear children are regarded as “real” women because their performance of gender, makes them the ideal better than the “other” women (Flavin, 2009:3), without children.

Denying a Nigerian woman, the right to bear children deprives her of a basic part of her humanity. Primarily, the value a woman receives in a patriarchal society depends on her procreative capacity. Her worth as a woman is seen from the perspective of her reproduction. Martha Fineman (1991) opines that motherhood is a colonized concept, the role of women as procreators in the society determines their identity. However, through their role as procreators, mothers are undervalued and trivialized. Filomena Chioma Steady (1993:14) maintains that the most important role for a African woman is being a mother, motherhood is central to all other roles and it is intricately tied to procreation and maintenance of family lineage. Nfah-Abennyi
(1997) queries this, saying that the “struggle for control over women’s reproductive and the childbearing capacities is the site of struggle for African women”. In support of Nfah, Adrienne Rich (1986), argues that a woman’s body is the terrain on which patriarchy is erected, she therefore proposes that motherhood should be an experience of choice, and not an institution. This way, childless women will be at liberty to live to the fullest, without fear of humiliation or intimidation. Along this line, Flavin asserts that if women decide to reject procreation, it will threaten patriarchy and conventional social structure. (7)

Motherhood is deeply inscribed in the psyche of most Nigerian women due to the internalization of patriarchal concepts which has resulted in an obsession with motherhood. The trope is deeply entrenched in the literary tradition of many African writers. Literary writers, especially feminist writers, have come to challenge these notions which imply inferiority and powerlessness of mothers, and gives mothers no agency. That is why Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie (1987) comments that, “The way African writers are enthused about motherhood, one wonders if there are no women who hate child birth or have undeveloped maternal instincts” (36). Society does not question the assumption that all women will eventually be mothers, rather the assumption is that every woman desires to have children. This is a wrong assumption because reproductive rights include that women have the right to decide whether or not to, they want to have children.

This feature of motherhood as a political institution that subordinate women has prompted Catharine MacKinnon (1983) to explain that women's subordination by men forms a system of power relations that is not undercut by women’s diversity. Motherhood, like sexuality, plays a critical role in women's subordination by men. She further explains that to speak of being treated "as a woman" is to make an empirical statement about reality, to describe the realities of
women's situation. It is therefore pertinent to say that by denying an infertile woman agency, the society is denying her reproductive freedom.

Rich asserts that motherhood in its present form denies women their potential as full human beings. She argues that:

Institutionalized motherhood demands of women maternal 'instinct'
rather than intelligence, selflessness rather than self-realization,
relation to others rather than the creation of self.
Motherhood is 'sacred' so long as its offspring are 'legitimate' -
that is, as long as the child bears the name of a father who legally
controls the mother. (17)

She identifies two forms of motherhood as she differentiates between the "experience of motherhood" - the relationship between a woman and her children – and "motherhood as enforced identity and as political institution," which she claims is fundamental to the concept of patriarchal ideology. Although some women have no desire to experience motherhood, as they see it as encumbering and intrusive, even though patriarchal ideology compels women to be mothers. Traditionally, the sanctity of motherhood not only encourages women to become mothers, but also relieve some of the pain women experience from their exploitation under patriarchy. Children become their succor in a dysfunctional marital environment. Therefore, Rich draws attention to the travails of women in their attempt to achieve the idealized impression of “Perfect Mother”. This may discourage women in the west to a point of experiencing “matrophobia” which means fear of motherhood or of one’s mother, a term reintroduced by
Rich. Although this calls for disidentification with mother, it has no place in the matripotent ethos of African women. (Oyewumi: 216).

2.2. Transforming Dominant Narratives, Re-writing Nigerian Motherhood

Nigerian literature is saturated with instances of male dominance and female marginalization. Men are portrayed as the super breed; female characters are created within the framework of their traditional roles as wives and mothers. These social values are so strong that the respect and love which women earn and their status in the society are relative to the degree of their adaptations to these roles. These cultural paraphernalia lay a siege on women’s bodies controlling them and their reproductive choices. Women are socialized to accept the roles cut out for them as 'breeders' of society. For as Flavin (2009) asserts, hegemonic ideals about femininity not only dictates how women should look but how they should behave. Women are expected to marry, procreate, care for their husbands, parent, and these experiences are expected to happen in certain ways (3). A woman’s value is derived from her child bearing capacity, for motherhood is women's most important social role: all women are socially defined as mothers or potential mothers.

In Nigerian tradition, a child is highly esteemed, nothing is considered as important as a child in the entire world. Children are priceless and child bearing is sacred. That is why some children are name Omorenagbon (having a child is better than owning the world), Omogiate (it is because of children that we have not been forgotten) Omoruyi (child brings honor), Omorede (a child is my crown), Omosefe (child is greater than wealth), Ekiomoado (the only business we are here for in this world, is the business of child bearing), Omosigho (child is greater than financial wealth), Omoragbon (child is my world) in Edo language. In Igbo it is Nwakego (child is more than money), and in Yoruba we have Omowale (a child has entered this house, the house is no
longer empty, it implies that without a child in a home, the house is empty). Omolola (this child is my wealth), Omogbenga (the child has lifted me up or brought me respect), Omoniyi (child brings respect, glory), Omolade (child is my crown), Mayowa (child is my crown), Omololu child is everything in life.

Society exerts structural and ideological pressures upon women to become mothers. It is engrossed in appraising women’s reproductive options. A woman’s ability to reproduce is what defines her femininity. No woman attains any important position in traditional African community if she has no children. When a woman fails to have children, society sees this as a transgression against gender norm. Childlessness excludes a woman from the ‘cult of motherhood’ in the church, or some community associations. Thus, an infertile woman is often demonized, regarded as a witch, a whore, a ‘man’, vicious and wicked. She is subject to oppression, relegated to the margin of humanity. Her humanity is demeaned and despised. There is utter disregard for her femininity. She sees herself as having failed her husband, her community and her family. As a result, she is down cast, silent, without a voice in community gatherings. She sees her childlessness as a curse, regarding herself as been abandoned or forgotten by God. Society decides the ideal notion of womanhood. As soon as a couple is joined in matrimony, the woman’s reproduction is often the focus of extended family members as there is constant policing and surveillance of her body and her reproductive ability. This why Flavin observes that “a woman’s gender is tied up in reproduction in a way that men’s gender is not…” (4). Women who fail to meet the ideal of motherhood are stigmatized for violating the dominant norm and considered wayward or receiving the reward of their wickedness (Roberts, 1993). Thus Nfah Abbenyi (1997) observes that in many literary works; a woman’s identity is portrayed through the framework of motherhood. This is probably because motherhood is always associated with
the understanding of Nigerian women’s lives and identities within socio-cultural contexts. In *Our Wife is not a Woman* by Stella Oyedepo, the mother-in-law, compels her son to marry another wife because of Dupe,'s (her daughter-in-law) inability to bear a child. Abena, Dupe’s mother-in-law’s friend’s, ask scornfully, “For how long will your son endure a barren woman.” Similarly, in *Nwanyibuife*, a play by Anuli Ausbeth-Ajagu we see the agony of a childless woman in Eastern Nigeria as in other parts of Africa. Chineze who is married to Oguefi is thrown out of her home because she cannot bear a child. When she calls on God as a source of comfort, her mother-in-law, Mama, torments her:

   Did I hear you mention God? The only god our people recognize is the God that opens the womb of a woman to produce children in abundance (8).

Here, the assumption is that God has destined every woman to have a child, when the reverse is the case, it is assumed that God has probably cursed the woman or her chi (destiny) has refused to favor her. Mama and her son Oguefi, succeed in getting a new wife to replace Chineze, and relegate her to perform only house hold chores.

   Oguefi: I warned you before that my new wife is the real woman in this house.

   You and your empty womb would be in charge of all the household chores. (10)

   It is in line with this humiliation that Ada Azodo (1992) has ask society to have a shift in their obsession with child bearing saying with reference to Nwapa’ works, that “women should feel free to engage in motherhood when it pleases them or withdraw from it anytime, through will or awareness”. A woman who is unable to become pregnant is called a man, and not a woman. This is seen in *Our Wife is not a Woman* by Stella Oyedepo where Dupe is insulted thus, “...is your madam a woman? To me she is not. Do you call her a woman? She is not a
woman…” (34) Also, in Onyekachukwu Onyekuba’s *Sons for my Son*, we see the same trend, as Ndidi, the wife of Obiefuna is mistreated by her mother-in-law because of her childlessness, her mother-in-law unleashes all manner of abusive names on her and threatens to bring a real wife for her son. She says to her,

Eniyide: I don’t blame you. My son allowed you to bring

Your ill-luck to him, that is why you have mouth to talk rot. (18).

To fulfill her threat, she attempts to kill Ndidi so she can bring in a new wife for her son. Unlike in the other cases, we see in *Sons for my Sons*, that it is Obiefuna, Ndidi’s husband that is infertile and not Ndidi. What the author has done is to draw our attention to the patriarchal culture that puts the blame of infertility on the woman all the time because it is a taboo to pronounce a man infertile in traditional African culture. (Agunloye, 2012)

In *The Last of the Strong Ones*, Ezeigbo focuses on the dominant meaning of barrenness in Igbo society (in Nigeria), she confronts patriarchy asking women to look beyond the patriarchal construct of motherhood, and she promotes the critical importance of the barren woman’s self-definition, in spite of how patriarchy shapes and defines barrenness in the society. Ezeigbo, insists that women should resist these constructions, and move ahead to become what they intend to become without feeling inferior or intimidated in the society. She argues that Flora Nwapa in her novels deconstructs motherhood by giving it a secondary position, implying that the most important thing for a woman is to be independent and economically empowered (Ezeigbo, 1998). This does not in any way imply that Ezeigbo recommends that women should abhor motherhood; rather, here her focus is on how society intimidates a barren woman, dehumanizing her and making her lose confidence in herself and her ability to become useful in the society. Rather than mourn over childlessness, a woman should put her energy into other
aspects of life that will be of benefit to her and the society. She portrays this in *The Last of the Strong One*, where she focuses on Chieme, her struggles in her matrimonial home and how she surmounts and overcome the reproach of barrenness.

Chieme, married Iwuchukwu at the age of sixteen. At this age Chieme had not experience menstruation, this is unusual, but not unlikely. However, as the absence of her menstrual flow prolongs, Iwuchukwu summons her one day into his obi (hut) and single handedly dissolves their marriage calling her a man:

> We have been husband and wife for almost four years.

> But nothing has come out of it. Is it not so? (104)

This implies that the ‘something’ in marriage is a child, without it, marriage is empty as it has nothing, for he says, “… I decided to end this marriage which I consider no marriage at all” (105). In confusion and shock Chieme tries to convince him to give her more time, for him not to be hasty in concluding the marriage: “But my husband don’t give up yet; I may still see it…” (105). Shutting her up, he cut in: “I do not share your hope”. At this point, he interrupts her impatiently repeating more emphatically:

> I want you to know that I have decided to end this marriage.

> Which I consider no marriage at all. (105)

Here we see that the ability of a woman to procreate in marriage is what legitimizes the marriage, for child bearing defines a woman’s femininity in Nigeria. Thus, respect for a woman’s reproductive ability is also inextricably connected to respect for her privilege as a human being. This implies that a marriage with no child has little or no chance of survival.
Although, marriage in Nigeria is between a man and a woman, it involves both families. Dissolution of marriage also involves the man and his family going to tell the woman’s family of their son’s desire to dissolve the marriage. In the case of Chieme, Iwuchukwu throws tradition to the wind, he single handedly dissolves the marriage. The way society has constructed motherhood, it facilitates male control of all women. So, with or without a child, the man displays his supremacy in the home using his patriarchal authority to do what traditionally is inappropriate. It is for this reason that feminist see motherhood as a patriarchal oppression, saying that patriarchy interprets motherhood to mean “one designed to serve the interests of men, a construction of motherhood by those in power” (Dorothy Roberts, 1993). So not been able to perform this role (motherhood or bearing children) angers the man, therefore he sees such a wife as of no use to him and must be discarded as is done to a worn-out rag.

Displaying so much bitterness and hatred for Chieme, as if she is to be blamed for her condition, he dissolves the marriage with a mere wave of hand, trivializing the union. The instinct is to throw out a barren woman or get another woman to fulfill her function of procreation (Salami-Agunloye, 2011). Society is structured that way. To hurt Chieme further, Iwuckukwu says, “You are not a woman” his eyes were challenging. And mocking” (106). “I do not want to live with a person I cannot say is a male or a female” (107). At this stage, Chieme’s femininity becomes doubtful as childbearing determines a woman’s identity. To emphasis this, and demonize her, he says, “I am afraid of you and can no longer continue with this marriage” (105). This fear means that she is genderless and therefore not human.

Motherhood defines true womanhood, it is being so carved out as the other identity for women that when she is childless, her status is perceived as one without identity. No self and no gender as many call childless woman a ‘man’. That is why Iwuchukwu pronounces Chieme a
‘man’ because she is childless. This verbal abuse and emotional torture traumatizes Chieme, she becomes heartbroken, down cast, “I was shocked and afraid. My heart palpitated. I trembled.” (105). “I wilted like cocoyam leaves do in the heat of the sun” (106). In a state of this despair, Iwukwuku continues to torment her with his harsh words. Kneeling in front of him, she pleads, “My husband do not do this to me…” In anger, Iwukwuku retorts “… I cannot wait any longer. I am the only son of my father. It is my duty to fill this ngwuru with children,” with this he dismisses her plea. In desperation and shame, she continues to plead, accepting to live with the incoming co-wife. “I am not against your taking a second wife, …But let me stay with you” (105). He refuses, giving flimsy excuses. Iwukwuku, probably would have thought it useless keeping a barren wife, seeing her as wasted and an unprofitable investment. His lack of emotion in presenting the issue to her and his choice of words “stung me like a scorpion. I wiped my eyes with the tail of my cloth. So that was how he saw me all this while and yet I believed I had a husband who loved me” (106)? This demoralizes Chieme, “my self-esteem was severely bruised…” (106). Adriene Rich (1976) has grossly criticized this often-devastating effect that the institutionalized motherhood and the practice of patriarchy have had on women who are unable to meet this demand of patriarchy over the years.

Salami-Agunloye articulates this in The Queen Sisters, Tracie Utoh in Our Wives have gone Mad Again, and Sadaawii in Woman at Point Zero to interrogate the patriarchal notion of motherhood in their respective societies, and to reconceptualize female infertility as a feminist strategy. They challenge the conventional male representation of women as mothers, recreating their own models. In The Queen Sisters, by Irene Salami-Agunloye, the Oba (King) expresses his delight in his role in the patriarchal structure saying: “whistling is not a difficult task in the mouth of the parrot” (p.16). He concludes his speech by outlining the role of women in a
marriage institution: “A man’s children are his assurance of greater tomorrow. His wives provide these children. That is their use” (16). This indicates that a woman’s worth is constructed around her child bearing.

Motherhood gives cultural legitimacy to female power. These are the parameters defined by patriarchal ideology and the wives have learnt to live with these male-defined parameters for their survival. For the queens in the harem, in *The Queen Sisters*, motherhood is so ingrained in their psyche that they see no alternative to being denied of their matrimonial bed by Ubi. For them motherhood is central to their identity. However, Ubi subverts this tradition that has enslaved and entrapped her co-queens by refusing to become pregnant. Ubi’s refusal of the role of motherhood can only be understood within the context of sexual politics of Nigerian tradition, in which bearing children is inscribed and valued in the harem. For Ubi, woman should be allowed to make their choices about childbearing. Ubi’s refusal to bear children is a transgression against the gender norms in Nigerian tradition. In celebration of motherhood, Tirosa expresses with reference to Ubi’s refusal to bear children: “If urine is so easy to pass, why do chickens not urinate? She must be barren” (41).

The assumption, in Nigeria, is that motherhood is a natural choice; only barrenness hinders the fulfillment of this choice. Ubi’s pretense of infertility is a form of resistance to male domination. This for her is part of her effort to reclaim her subjectivity. She is conscious of the fact that motherhood can interfere with her proposed mission to the harem. She refuses to find fulfillment in the traditional mode of ideal womanhood. Here Salami-Agunloye problematizes the dominant narratives that all women must be mothers. Ubi can be likened to Meredith’s (2018) Sapphire, “a monstrous figure, a non-normative being—that fails to conform to preferred patriarchal … imaginings of ideal femininity…she is anti-mother. She is the monstrous non-
mother in cultural imagining (14). Women must confront this challenge, exercise their agency to resist dominant construction of femininity and womanhood, for every woman’s reproductive contribution to the society must be cherished irrespective of whether they have children to show for it or not.

2.3. The Media and the Power to Influence/Change Attitude and Behavior

This project is hinged on McCombs and Shaw’s Agenda-Setting Theory of the mass media and the dominance feminism school of thought which was made popular by the works of Catherine Mackinnon and Kathleen Barry amongst others. The agenda-setting theory also known as the agenda setting function of the mass media which was first propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) describes the potent influence of the mass media as regards their ability to tell us what issues are important at every given time and suggests that the media determines the subject of public attention and discussion. According to the theory, the media sets the public agenda by determining and giving prominence to issues that the media audience will direct their attention towards, in the sense that they may not necessarily tell the general public what to think but rather what they should think about. In this regard, Cohen (1963:13) states that “The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about.”

For long, the media has been known to be a powerful voice in the world and capable of delivering abundant amount of information within our society on an increasingly quick basis, leading to the observation that media contents have a relationship with the public agenda. It was this observation that led to the theorization of a cause-and-effect relationship between the power
of the media and society’s opinion known as the Agenda Setting Theory (Adams, Harf & Ford, 2014:2). McCombs and Shaw put forth the theory to conceptualize and explain the power of the media to set a nation’s agenda as well as to direct and focus public attention on important public issues. Although the agenda-setting function and influence of the news media was first introduced and discussed in McComb and Shaw’s now famous study in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, which examined the 1968 presidential election in the US, the theory as intended now applies generally to the media and the messages/information which they prioritize and attach great importance to effectively transmit to the public and, which in turn, shapes the priority of the public. For the amount and frequency of messages/information which the media consider to be very critical and effectively feeds the public with can sway public opinion and determine the level of importance the public will place on those issues. Apparently, what we know about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us. More specifically, the result of this mediated view of the world is that the priorities of the media also strongly influence the priorities of the public such that elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent in the public mind (McCombs, 2015:2).

Thus, the media, based on their persuasive social presence, can capably show and/tell the public topical issues that are pertinent, and in that way, build public understanding of those issues as well as stimulate public deliberations on them. In their first article where the agenda-setting theory was used, entitled The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media, McCombs and Shaw (1972:176) succinctly explain in their abstract that “In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position…” The central thesis of the
agenda-setting theory of the media is that “people learn from the media what the important issues are” (qtd in Muin, 2011:1).

In addition to the agenda-setting influence of the media to direct public attention to certain important issues – the public agenda/the focus of public attention – the media also influences our understanding and viewpoints on the issues that preoccupy media contents/messages. “Agenda Setting is a robust and widespread effect of mass communication, an effect that results from specific content in mass media” (McCombs, 2004). In relation to this project, therefore, it can be said that the manner and level of media coverage/reportage on the phenomenon of baby factory in Nigeria to raise public awareness on the issue will undeniably determine the critical nature of attention the public will devote to the issue and also what they know of it. It will also amount to agenda-setting when my screen play is shot in the future and used for advocacy and awareness campaigns against baby factories.
3 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

3.1. Performance as Research

This thesis adopts qualitative methodology, specifically; performance research as postulated by Dwight Conquergood, Richard Schechner and others. This is based on its ability to open spaces between analysis and action, as a methodology in the project on the clandestine baby factory business in Nigeria. Also, because performance research and practice both provide a positive stimulus to creative work, an opening out and up of imaginative possibility whereby the emotive and cognitive, the popular and the esoteric, the local and the global can come into play (Reinelt and Roach, 1992:1). Performance, thus, as a robust methodology, provides an impetus for this project which traverses between theory and practice to further articulate the subject matter of baby factory within the context of performance – the script written for this project will be realized on screen or stage.

Although performance as research is not a new method, however, it has historically been misunderstood and occasionally maligned (Lewis and Tulk, 2016). It has just recently been validated as a field of inquiry. The research methods are often performative, action-oriented and experience-based. One of the major authors that has advanced the relevance of this methodology is Dwight Conquergood, who argues that the dominant way of knowing in the academy is that of empirical observation and critical analysis from a distanced perspective: “knowing that,” and “knowing about.” This is a view from above the object of inquiry: knowledge that is anchored in paradigm and secured in print. This propositional knowledge is shadowed by another way of knowing that is grounded in active, intimate, hands-on participation and personal connection: “knowing how,” and “knowing who. “This is a view from ground level, in the thick of things. This is knowledge that is anchored in practice and circulated with in a performance community
but is ephemeral (Conquergood, 2002:146). Donna Haraway (1991) locates this homely and
vulnerable “view from a body” in contrast to the abstract and authoritative “view from above,”
universal knowledge that pretends to transcend location (196). Asserting that the academy under
the banner of science disqualified, trivialized and repressed alternative models of knowing like
those rooted in embodied experience, orality/orature, considering them unscientific (140). In this
instance, I would draw on what Michel Foucault coined as subjugated knowledge which he
explains include all the local, regional, vernacular, naive knowledges at the bottom of the
hierarchy—the low Other of science (1980:81–84). These are the non-serious ways of knowing
that dominant culture neglects, excludes, represses, or simply fails to recognize.

The dominant culture neglects, excludes, represses, or simply fails to recognize.
Subjugated knowledge, it is given less attention because they are illegible; they exist, by and
large, as active bodies of meaning, outside of books, eluding the forces of inscription that would
make them legible, and thereby legitimate (de Certeau 1998; Scott 1998). Consequently,
Conquergood argues that subordinate people do not have the privilege of explicitness, the luxury
of transparency, the presumptive norm of clear and direct communication, free and open debate
on a level playing field that the privileged classes take for granted (146).

Similarly, ‘the privilege class’ in the academy regard performance research as
comparatively less appreciated than traditional research in ‘print’ which approach research in a
top-bottom manner. Oyeronke Oyewunmi (1997), sees this as a hallmark of the expansion of
Europe and the establishment of Euro/American cultural hegemony throughout the world.

More convincingly, Raymond Williams (1983) challenges the intellectual superiority
and arrogance of scriptocentrism, indicating that the “error” and “delusion” of “highly
educated” people are “so driven in on their reading” that “they fail to notice that there are other
forms
of skilled, intelligent, creative activity” such as “theatre” and “active politics.” He argues that “the contempt” for performance and practical activity, “which is always latent in the highly literate, is a mark of the observer’s limits, not those of the activities themselves” (309). Williams critiques scholars for limiting their sources to written materials; for according to Kenneth Burke (1945) scholarship is skewed toward texts. That is why de Certeau (1984), asserts that this scriptocentrism is a hallmark of Western imperialism. “Posted above the gates of modernity, this is the sign: ‘Here only what is written is understood…” (161).

Paul Gilroy (1994:77) in his study of the oppositional politics of black musical performance also argues in favor of the need for critical scholars to move beyond the “idea and ideology of the text and of textuality as a mode of communicative practice which provides a model for all other forms of cognitive exchange and social interaction.” Similarly, Frederick Douglass (1990:3) calls for an experiential, participatory epistemology which is considered to the armchair “reading of whole volumes.” Suggesting that victimized and oppressed people such as the enslaved are met on the ground of their experience by exposing oneself to their expressive performance, he re-echoes Johannes Fabian’s call for a turn “from informative to performative ethnography” which Conquergood (2002:149) described as an ethnography of the ears and heart that reimagines participant-observation as co-performative witnessing. Nonetheless, performance studies have made it possible in its radical interventionist approach by embracing both written scholarship and creative work, papers and performances. Therefore, it is expedient to challenge the hegemony of the text by reconfiguring texts and performances in such a way that it aligns horizontal, properly with the romance of performance for the authority of the text. This rare hybridity is brought into the academy by performance studies as a commingling of analytical and artistic ways of knowing that unsettles the institutional organization of knowledge and
disciplines. For the real strength of performance studies lies in its capacity to bridge segregated and differently valued knowledges and drawing together legitimated as well as subjugated modes of inquiry (Conquergood, 2002:151-152). Hence, it is no surprise that an emergent genre of performance studies that embodies the text-performance hybridity is on the rise with performance studies scholars/researchers rising to the occasion of creating performances (on stage/screen) to serve as supplement, not substitute, to the written research.

Following in this way, we can then say that there is the utilization of “performance both as a way of knowing and as a way of showing” (Kemp, 1998:116). In this regard, with performance studies being uniquely positioned for the challenge of bringing together disparate and stratified ways of knowing, performance can be thought of along three crisscrossing lines of activity and analysis as such: (1) as a work of imagination, as an object of study; (2) as a pragmatics of inquiry (both as model and method), as an optic and operator of research; (3) as a tactics of intervention, an alternative space of struggle (Conquergood, 2002:152). As Conquergood further explains, when performances are created to supplement and complement a research, they are for several vital reasons. The creative works are developed for multiple professional reasons: they deepen experiential and participatory engagement with materials both for the researcher and her audience; they provide a dynamic and rhetorically compelling alternative to conference papers; they offer a more accessible and engaging format for sharing research and reaching communities outside academia; they are a strategy for staging interventions. (Conquergood, 2002:152).

In the essay “Performance Theory, Hmong Shamans, and Cultural Politics,” Conquergood (1992:41-45) draws on Hmong shamanic performances which is an intricate assemblage of dynamically orchestrated image and functions as a condensation symbol that
collects, absorbs and, most importantly, display afflictions, to further prove that performances reconstitute certain events/situations. The re-enacted experiences are said to be relived (by the performers/players) in all their vividness and bluntness, hence, reconstituting agent and agency and reconfiguring context.

The shamanic dramatic performance is a theatrically sophisticated, complex and contextually nuanced performance practice that is enmeshed in the current cultural politics of Hmong people struggling to cope with post-Vietnam War devastation of refugee upheaval, displacement, dispersal, and domination. It is both mimetic and appropriate and as well purgative for the patients (victims – refugees) because it convincingly mimes their listlessness, depression and heaviness of spirit. Following in the same manner that shamanic performance mirrors the experience of victims based on the logic that making a spectacle of something is a strategy for control, my screen play will relay what the experiences are for women, young girls and children as victims of baby factories and, hopefully, seeing it (as a film or stage performance – drama) will place viewers/spectators in a power relationship over that which is watched or seen. In this way, performance as restored behavior offers the chance for players to become and depict the lives of women as victims of baby factories and project a better life that they wish and should experience. For as Conquergood (1992:44) points out, emphasizing the ‘restoration” qualities of performance encourage “revision” and change, which means changing performance scores as highlighted by Augusto Boal in his influential treatise Theatre of the Oppressed where he develops the revolutionary potential of a restoration, processual view of performance as a revisioning, reassembling, and reworking of social reality. He points to the enormous efficacy of transformations celebrated in performance and emphatically makes clear that performance
(theatre) is change and not simple presentation of what exists: it is becoming and not being
(Boal, 1985:28, 1).

In the words of Schechner (2003:22), “performances mark identities, bend time, reshape
and adorn the body, and tell stories. Performances – of art, rituals, or ordinary life – made of
“twice-behaved behaviors,” “restored behaviors,” performed actions that people train to do, that
they practice and rehearse.” The concept of restored behavior which implies the restoration of
behavior is symbolic and reflexive; it consists of recombining bits of previously behaved
behaviors. Restored behavior is the key process of every kind of performing, in everyday life, in
healing, in ritual, in play, and in the arts. Restored behavior is one behaving as someone else as
observed, learned or told to do (Schechner, 2003:28). The implication of this is that any
event/occurrence, situation, action or thing can be studied as performance and can be analyzed in
terms of doing, behaving and showing. Thus, the focus of this thesis is on the baby factory
phenomenon in Nigeria within the context of performance and pertaining to my screen play. It is
hoped that this screen play will be shot or staged in the future and it will serve the purpose of
advocacy and awareness creation.

The paradigm of performance studies is an interdisciplinary field of research that draws
on and synthesizes approaches from the social sciences, the humanities and the performing arts,
feminist/gender studies, queer theory, semiotics, cybernetics, media and popular culture theory
as well as cultural studies. Performance studies focuses on the pervasiveness of performance as a
central element of social and cultural life, including not only theatre and dance but also such
forms as sacred rituals and practices of everyday life, storytelling and public speaking, avant-
garde performance art, popular entertainments, micro constructions of ethnicity, race, class, sex
and gender, world fairs and heritage festivals, nonverbal communication, play and sports,
political demonstrations, sex shows and drag performance – potentially any instance of expressive behavior or cultural enactment (McKenzie, 2005; Schechner, 2013).

There is need to open up an international space for conversations in a deliberate way to foreground the intellectual benefits of such a model, so that the rigor and the validity of Performance as Research in the academy can be reinforced. After all, scriptwriting is scholarship and it utilizes research and conceptual construction and to sum it up, performance research provides a tool for reflexivity and critical awareness of knowledge formation.

3.2. Choice of Play Typology

The choice of a screenplay over stage play in this thesis is borne out of the fact that with the emergence of the Nigerian movie industry popularly known as Nollywood, the whole of Africa and the Caribbean have become enthused with the movies they produce. As a child of necessity which emerged to fill the gap created by the huge decline in the country’s theatre and stage culture, Nollywood video films have become an enviable artistic cultural vehicle through which African narratives and or various aspects of Nigeria’s socio-political reality is communicated to the world (Nwachukwu, 2012). In doing so, Nigerian movies have successfully become a staple in many African homes, within and in Diaspora.

Until recently, African film industry relied on video production which is far cheaper than the conventional film production. A video CD is relatively very cheap to purchase. Nollywood films are easily accessible in a world that is screen driven, making Africa fast becoming a mobile continent. Moreover, the modern world operates on-screen today obviously more than ever. As Omoera (2009) observes, the video film in contemporary Africa, Nollywood especially, is one of
the greatest pastimes due largely to its accessibility to huge audience, including children and adolescents, as compared with an older form of media production like the cinema (193).

In film, the camera plays a decisive role of eliminating the distance between the performer and the viewer. Therefore, using the medium of film to reach the public will be meeting them in their own space. However, I am not relegating the importance of stage plays/theater to the background, considering the significance of offering its audiences and actors the added benefit of the live experience. With the threat and spate of terrorism, theaters are becoming threatened spaces in Nigeria. Since theatre is adaptive, and in the words of Peter Brook, a theatre can take place in any open space, if the advocates decide to stage a play. For this reason, the screen play is written in a flexible manner so that it can adapt to any of the genres as occasion demands.

3.3 Methods

This project adopts the Performance Studies methodology, based on its ability to open up spaces between analysis and action. In this regard, for future use of the screenplay for advocacy, TfD and EE are proposed methods. Theater for Development (TfD) and Entertainment Education (EE), aspects of performance studies, in which knowledge is anchored on practice and community participation. The project draws on existing scholarly works, several media reportage and documentary films on baby factories coupled with TfD, EE and Advocacy principles to write an advocacy screen play/stage play. In adopting these methods, the play addresses the clandestine baby factory phenomenon which is the subject investigated in this project. The Screenplay, for this project, through its public performances in the future, will be used to highlight and draw critical attention to the baby factory trend to call for its discouragement and/or eradication. It will be used for advocacy with the intention of bringing
about the desired change in the demand chain of this business, with the hope that this project will initiate a critical turn around in the illegal transaction and trafficking of infant babies.

Entertainment-Education (EE) is a communication strategy that combines education with entertainment and has a long history in ancient times from when entertaining stories were known to have been used to pass on wisdom, knowledge and values from generation to generation. However, modern Entertainment-Education historically dates from the 1940s and 1950s, the period when radio dramas enlightened and entertained farmers and their families. For instance, The Lawsons in Australia and The Archers in the United Kingdom motivated the people at the time to embrace agricultural innovations.

Entertainment Education, henceforth EE, is a unification of design and technique where education is woven into the narrative of entertainment to cause public awareness aimed at bringing about a desired social change in the audience members and the society at large (Khalid and Ahmed, 2014:70). EE, two separate fields – entertainment and education – combined to form a robust and effective concept/method, generally uses a wide-range of entertainment genres such as drama (on radio/Tv/film, stage), animated cartoons, music, street theatre and other communication formats that can enlighten and motivate while also entertaining to address social issues to affect social change.

EE as a strategic communication tool has been applied and used in development works in the areas of conflict resolution and peace building, promotion of human rights, community/rural development, environmental intervention and the likes. The objectives as well as agendas of EE at the strategic level are said to vary from promoting individual behavioral change to supporting social change. Over the years, EE has also been used effectively in addressing health-related issues such as blood pressure, smoking, vaccine promotion, family and HIV/AIDS prevention
In the same way EE has been a tool for changing health behavior, it can also be utilized to draw public attention to the growing trend of baby factory in Nigeria with its attendant forced impregnation of young girls and women which ultimately leads to forced and involuntary childbirth/motherhood. In this way, the medium of drama (on screen and or stage) will be used to both entertain and draw critical attention to the ugly baby factory trend in Nigeria. In contributing to social change, therefore, EE is generally capable of influencing public awareness, attitudes and behaviors towards a desired end and influence the external environment of the audience to help create the necessary conditions for social change at the level of the group or system. The effectiveness and advantages of EE is summed up in the nine Ps espoused by Piotrow et al (1997:327) as follows: Pervasive (Entertainment is everywhere), Popular (People like entertainment), Personal (Audiences identify with the characters), Participatory (Audiences have a role in the development of E-E and respond to E-E programs), Passionate (E-E appeals to emotions), Persuasive (Audience members imitate the role models in E-E programs), Practical (Media already exist, and performers want to participate in interesting programs), Profitable (E-E attracts sponsors and can advance the career of producers, writers, and performers), Proven effective (E-E can increase knowledge, change attitudes, and move people to action).

Closely related and like EE is the method of Theatre for Development (TFD) which is a dynamic participatory method and strategy. It describes any kind of theatre/development practices that uses performance to engage with people with the aim of seeking ways to grapple with problems and issues affecting the people. Although other terms such as Popular Theatre, Community Theatre, Radical Theatre, Propaganda Theatre, Case Drama or Forum Theatre have been used to describe this strategy and what it seeks to achieve, Theatre for Development remains the widely accepted nomenclature for this participatory and mass-oriented theatre.
practice. Theatre for Development, henceforth TFD, derives from the political and aesthetic philosophy of both Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire whose theories are greatly influenced by and anchored on Marxist philosophy (Wade, 2011). The emergence of Theatre for Development was precipitated by the need for an entertainment medium that will provide people with quality information to make informed choices in life and to improve the quality of their lives. The works of these two theorists seeks to evolve in the suffering and oppressed masses a kind of conscientisation through entertainment which teaches how to perceive socio-economic and political contradictions to take action against oppressive elements of reality.

TFD, as a participatory approach that is democratic in nature and allows community members to be part of the performance, is usually described as a theatre of the people, for the people and by the people since the people are involved and their expressive medium is often used to address issues pertinent to them. TFD is thus a means of bringing people together to build confidence and solidarity, stimulate discussion, explore alternative options for action and also build a collective commitment to changes, beginning with the people’s urgent concern and issues so as to encourage and/or stimulate reflections on the issues and possible strategies for change (Kidd, 1982).

Although the method in TFD is usually to involve the people in the script development, it is however not uncommon for a dramatic script/text already developed or a movie to be taken to them for performance. These can also be used as a stimulus to help generate discussions towards finding solutions to their identifies problems. The point is for issues affecting the people to be addressed and their experiences recounted. Either ways, they are still radical intervention strategies/methods with performance being central to them. In his Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research, Conquergood (2002:1152) upholds this radical intervention
claim and suggested it is also down to the fact that a performance studies project embraces both written scholarship and creative work, papers and performance. In his submission, Douglas appear to support the TFD framework with his suggestion that a researcher be empathetic to the plight of the oppressed (enslaved) and meeting them on the ground of their experience, thereby being open to their expressive performance. To fully grasp the meaning and condition of women’s slavery in these baby factories therefore, Douglas recommends an experiential, participatory epistemology such as characteristic of TFD.

Against the backdrop a play is written on the chosen subject of inquiry – baby factory – for future performances in public places, performance can then be thought of (1) as a work of imagination, as an object of study; (2) as a pragmatics of inquiry (both as model and method), as an optic and operator of research; (3) as a tactics of intervention, an alternative space of struggle.

This project will use the strategy of advocacy, as an epistemological approach. Advocacy, in simple terms, is the process of promoting/supporting a cause or speaking and acting in the interest of oneself and/or others. It involves taking actions that is aimed at getting the government, institutions, communities, schools as well as stake holders to correct an unfair or harmful situation affecting people in the society (Breitrose, 2018). Advocacy in all its forms seeks to ensure that people, specifically those who are most vulnerable in the society, are able to talk and have their voices heard on issues affecting and are important to them; defend and safeguard their rights and; have their views, wishes and feelings genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives (SEAP Advocacy, 2018). An advocacy effort, like a TFD practice, is people-oriented and seeks to facilitate a stronger voice for people and for them also to have as much control as possible over their lives.
Through advocacy works, be it in the form of theatre or drama performances, the public can be conscientised and enlightened, the rights of people can be safeguarded, and they can also be supported to take decisions or make informed choices in their personal lives. An advocacy research, thus, helps to assemble and use information and resources to bring about positive improvements in the lives of people (Given, 2008). It seeks to investigate and intervene in favor of the liberation of oppressed groups and also to give voice to society’s most vulnerable and marginalized groups (Mayoux, 2014). It therefore means that my project on the baby factory phenomenon in Nigerian amounts to an advocacy work that seeks freedom for the vulnerable and oppressed societal groups, mainly women and children.

On these notes, an EE, TfD and advocacy screen play has been written as part of this project will serve as catalyst for the education and enlightenment of the public on the clandestine baby factory phenomenon in Nigeria, having the ability to influence and change societal attitudes and behaviors. The future shooting and or performance of the play before a wide-ranging audience will embody an advocacy work that seeks liberation for the vulnerable and oppressed societal groups, mainly women and children.

As Mahmood (2001:2007) argues, it is important for these groups, especially the young girls and women who are forced into motherhood in these baby factories, to be liberated and empowered as motherhood ought to be a thing of choice. It then follows that their decision of motherhood should be because of their “own will” (free and personal choice) rather than of custom, tradition, or direct coercion. It is thus required that her action about motherhood be the consequences of her “own will” rather than of custom, tradition, or direct coercion. For the methods of EE, TfD and advocacy to be effective in addressing the issue of baby factories, the screen/stage play written for this project, is based on and significantly influenced by personal
observation and other information sourced from documentary films and other media reportage on
the practice (i.e. newspaper and radio), books and journal articles. These sources provide
objective and factual raw materials which was used to explore the subject matter of baby factory
and how it victimizes women and children.

3.4. Beat Sheets of “Disposable Womb” (Screenplay)

ACT 1

SCENE 1

The mime

As Zona plaits Yuwa’s hair, Robosa, Zona’s husband and his mother Iro suddenly burst into the
house and starts throwing Yuwa’s possessions outside, because she is childless. Zona intercedes
but they turn deaf ears.

SCENE 2

A Story: Set up: Idah, Zona’s father announces that Zona has gained admission to study
medicine in UK and would be leaving the next day.

SCENE 3

Family dinner. Zona rushes to the bathroom to throw up. Zona's parents suspect malaria fever
and ask the driver to take her to the doctor’s office for proper investigation (in Nigeria you can
walk into the doctor’s office without prior booking).

SCENE 4

Sede tries to intervene in the dispute between her brother Robosa, and his wife, Yuwa. Sede
questions her brother’s fertility.
SCENE 5
Dr. Tosa informs Zona that she is nine weeks pregnant. Zona is devastated.

ACT 2

SCENE 1
Frustrated, Zona heads for Nosa’s house. She is stunned to meet another girl, Tama, in Nosa’s house. She informs Nosa that she is pregnant. He reassures her that he will ‘fix’ the situation. He hurriedly leaves the house. As soon as Nosa exits, Zona and Tama discuss and they discover that both of them are pregnant for Nosa. Instead of fighting, they bond and become friends. When he returns, Nosa blind folds them and drives them to the baby factory.

SCENE 2
Zona and Tama arrive at the baby factory, which is in the middle of a thick forest. Zona is shocked to find several girls at different stages of pregnancy in the baby factory. It suddenly dawns on Zona that Nosa is a criminal, and part of the baby factory criminal gang.

SCENE 3
Idah and Mina, Zona’s parents are still awaiting the arrival of Zona. They call Dr. Tosa to enquire about her whereabouts and he informs them that Zona is pregnant.

SCENE 4
Zona, Tama, Runa and Ede attempt to escape. Nosa and three other men intercept them. Tama tries to escape but Nosa shoots her and she drops dead. The men in the factory sexually abuse all the girls.

SCENE 5
Yuwa meets Ivie several years after high school. Ivie convinces Yuwa to move with her.
SCENE 6
Zona’s parents are still searching for her.

SCENE 7
Ivie convinces Yuwa to ‘buy’ a baby from the baby factory. She calls Nosa to book an appointment for them. Yuwa, is suspicious of the factory and therefore shows no interest, she dismisses her. SCENE 8
Zona tries to conscientize the girls at the baby factory with the intention of liberating themselves from the baby factory.

SCENE 9
Yaba one of the pregnant girls commits suicide. In the midst of the chaos, Zona and Ede escapes from the baby factory.

SCENE 10
The policemen who have been keeping a close watch on Nosa’s house, storm the house and arrest his friend, Iyamu.

SCENE 11
Ivie and Yuwa are at the baby factory to ‘buy’ a baby. Yuwa is reluctant, Ivie bargains with Ghosa. As Yuwa rises to leave, the policemen burst into the baby factory, arresting all the baby factory operators, Yuwa and Ivie.

SCENE 12
Zona and Ede are running in the forest trying to find their way out to a nearby town. In this process, Zona falls into labor and puts to birth. She is thirsty, so Ede rushes out in search of water.
Nosa appears searching for Zona and Ede, after a long search, he stumbles on Zona and the baby. Excited, he snatches the baby from Zona and escapes, abandoning her in the forest. After this Zona faints and is unconscious on the ground. When Ede returns, she revives Zona and supports her as they continue their journey. Unfortunately, they are kidnapped again by Fulani armed Bandits.

**ACT 3**

**SCENE 1**

Sede makes another attempt to help restore Robosa and Yuwa’s marriage. This time she is happy to see a transformed Robosa. He resolves to go in search of his wife irrespective of what Iro, his mother’s position is on the issue.

**SCENE 2**

The policemen continue the search for Zona and Ede. They eventually rescue Zona and Ede, amidst gun exchanges with the Fulani bandits, leaving many Fulanis dead. They capture Nosa and recover the baby from him. As he attempts to escape, they shoot him, and he dies.

**SCENE 3**

Zona and Ede are in the hospital recovering from the trauma and wound. Yuwa and Mina enter with Zona’s baby, followed by Idah, Robosa and Iro. Its time of reconciliation and reuniting for everyone. Zona voluntarily gives up her baby to Yuwa, Iro, her mother-in-law, jumps in excitement and dances round the room. Ede falls into labor and promises to give Yuwa her baby after delivery.
3.5. Proposed Performance Context

This section discusses the proposed performance context for sensitization and advocacy against baby factory. There are various options for using the screen play for this project: screening the film on a wide screen for participants to view, discuss and analyze at the end, act it on stage and discuss and analyze at the end, watch the film, and use it as a stimulus to generate performance. Other strategies involves using TfD principles of going to a community like: church, motor parks (in Nigeria motor parks are very busy places like markets, with passengers and numerous cars, drivers, traders, eating places, touts and motor conductors (assistants)), market places, schools, Palaces, town squares, town hall and under any shade tree.

The simplest way to utilize the full benefits of the screenplay written for this project would be using TfD principle. The use of theater in participatory work with adults is becoming widespread. It has been found to help adults, youth and children identify problem areas in their lives and to find solutions. Theatrical forms of communication used with, and by adults and children, include drama, songs, dances and puppetry, all of which are geared towards attracting the masses. They are performed in the language and idiom best understood by the participants. In this context, a town hall can be used as location for watching the movie: “Disposal Womb” or excerpts of it.

The TfD experience is not mere exposure to, or participation in performance. Rather, building on Augusto Boal’s (2001) concepts of theater and on Paulo Freire’s approach to popular education (2000), this strategy is used to enable participants to identify problems, analyze their causes and consequences, explore and rehearse solutions, and evaluate change (Salami 2002). In contrast to the individualistic nature of most western education which leads to personal advancement, entertainment education and TfD recognizes energy and potential within each
person and each community. It aims to empower people and communities to contribute fully to
the process of building a society in which all people can meet their basic needs (Hope and
Timmel 1999, 16).

The principles of popular education are fundamental to TfD initiative which encourages
participation, dialogue and critical consciousness. Working according to these principles helps to
stimulate a process of community or group problem solving by bringing members of a
community together, building community cohesiveness and enabling important issues to be
raised and discussed (Salami 2002, 204).

The emphasis during performance is on meaningful participation. The basic principles on
which the theater operates reflect a respectful and ethical approach in working as a group. The
proposed theater can take place in a big town hall (most rural and urban centers in Nigeria have
community town halls where they meet or have their events) convenient for screening films.
Then, after watching the screen play, the participants identify or choose themes or topics from
the film which they want to discuss. Following this, they prioritize the problems they identified
in the film and decide on how they want to present these problems.

**Entry Process**

Having identified a location, the team seeks the consent of the authorities or gatekeepers of the
location. In seeking their consent, the objectives, process and expected project outcome are
explained, as well as the hopes for the ways the information might be used.

In TfD projects, participants are not approached individually, nor as a group, and asked to
participate. Rather, their attention is drawn by project facilitators through attention getters like,
clowning, drumming and dancing in the streets and use of town criers. Participants drawn by the
revelry to join in the singing and dancing and follow facilitators to the chosen location. After the
dancing and singing, the lead facilitator addresses the crowd that usually follow them to the proposed venue. At the end of this, those participants who are interested and curious remain, they are invited to spend time to watch the film. After watching the film “Disposable Womb”, they are shared into groups (groups can be based on age, gender or educational background, depending on the community). They arrange their chairs in a semi-circle.

**Facilitation**

The TfD process ensures that participants are drawn into a participatory process by setting guidelines for facilitators. They need to learn from the participants, relate to them at their own level, build on what they know and encourage them to express themselves freely. Facilitators must be prepared to offer praise, love and patience, to introduce humor into activities, to acknowledge the unique nature of every participant and to allow them to enter and leave the project freely. They must acknowledge the unique nature of every one of them.

There is need for a facilitation team, which comprises of the project leader, (undergraduate university students studying theater Arts are always readily available) it is important for members of the community, about six members to be part of the facilitating team. They act as peer facilitator. The peer facilitators serve a valuable liaison function between the facilitators and the participants. They understand the community dynamics better and their presence will help the other participants to feel more comfortable in the project. The student facilitators coach the peer facilitators on general routines. The peer group facilitators, in turn, instruct the students on routines and norms of the community life. Since peer facilitators usually know whether participants are responding honestly or not, this will ease the process of working with the participants.
The facilitators are to respect the participants’ views and personal history as this put them at ease. Vernacular and/or Pidgin English languages can be used. The facilitators set the mood from the beginning, guiding, commenting, translating and summarizing for the participants. The empathetic role helps to develop sound interpersonal and inter-group relations, to draw in shy participants and to prevent very vocal ones from dominating the discussions. This dynamic is common in participatory work in TfD

**Methods and Process**

Theater for Development entail the use of participatory methods in combination with theater (including role play, games, songs, dances and other activities). The purpose is to enable a community group to identify and prioritize problems and to find and rehearse their own solutions in a way like that of Boal’s Forum Theatre (Boal 2001).

Participatory engagement used in TfD includes an activity profile, mobility map, focus group discussions, listening survey, role-playing (termed a code – of action) and dances. These activities set the pace and help participants relax and be comfortable to speak of, or portray, sensitive issues in their lives or identified in the film.

**Situation Analysis and the Film**

The project should begin with a situation analysis of the identified location. The objective is to identify the main problems of the community in relation to “Disposable Womb”. The simplest tool used is a listening survey, which can be described as an elaborate form of focus group discussion. In the listening survey the facilitators can ask participants to discuss about how any particular culture as portrayed in the film, impacts their community. This is done in an unstructured conversation in which participants should feel relax and talk about problematic
cultural issues that they identify in the film. The purpose is to discover the deepest feelings of the group and the issues about which they feel most strongly about, in relation to the film “Disposable Womb” or excerpts of it. They are again shared into group to discuss issues in the film from their various perspectives. This should be done in a friendly atmosphere; the participants should be at ease to talk in a relaxed and honest way. The facilitation team listens to the unstructured conversation on issues that may promote baby factory. When the participants show strong feelings about certain issues, the facilitators should focus on these and ask questions around them. Sometimes new issues that are not in the film may emerge during this process, ones which the participants feel more strongly about. There should be no guidance on the topics to be discussed. The listening survey always reveal issues peculiar to the community.

The facilitator should note the revelation during the situation analysis: For example:

- Family interference in marriage.
- Teenage pregnancy
- High School drop out
- Parents dependence on income from young children.
- Young girls who hawk on the street.
- Sexual harassment and other abuse of teenage girls.

**Identifying Themes for Performance**

Based on the films the participants may want to do another performance which is derived from a theme in the film. After the situation analysis is complete, the first step is taken in the sequence which would lead to the development of critical awareness in the participants. It requires the
identification of key problem areas (generative themes) in the film. The second step would illustrate these in theatrical performances (codes). The third and fourth steps would entail analysis of the problem areas and suggestions for change in attitudes and behavior to alleviate the problems they have highlighted.

In each of the groups, while some facilitators monitor the discussion the others record the unfolding event. Rapporteurs should also record events in writing as much as possible. Discussions should be geared towards helping the participants develop critical awareness. This enable them to detect issues to which they respond with intense feeling. People are usually only willing to act on issues that they feel strongly about. Each of the groups will identify the generative theme from the film they desire to act out in the context of their culture. After this, they have brainstormed on the most powerful way to project the themes theatrically.

**Codes**

Scenarios that are adopted and developed for theatrical performance are called codes. A code is a concrete presentation of a familiar problem about which the group has strong feelings. A code could take the form of a poster, a play, a slide, film, poem, song, newspaper articles, picture, painting, story, proverb or riddle (Hope and Timmel 1999, 75). It presents to participants, in a familiar way, topics they might have discussed (Hope and Timmel 1999, 76). In most instances, a play is commonly used in code. However, stories, film, pictures, proverbs and newspaper articles are also used often to stimulate action and raise questions. In this situation, “Disposable Womb” film can be used as the stimulus material. Codes do not offer solutions. Solutions arise when actions taken lead to transformation or change in attitude. The essence of developing codes is to motivate participants to see that “the way things are now is not the only
way that they could be” (Salami 2002), so that they can take responsibility for shaping their lives and their community. This notion of transformation is derived from Paulo Freire (2000).

As the participants discuss their code, their focus should be on the generative themes they had chosen earlier. While they discussed their themes, they will become alive, excited, show deep concern, and at other times, express strong disagreement on issues or shout at the tops of their voices. These responses show how fully they are engaging with the themes because the purpose of the code is to stimulate discussion and to enable the participants to analyze the situation, they are in.

In preparing their codes the participants should be careful to deal with themes about which they feel strongly about. They should select simple and comprehensible scenes that can raise awareness and stimulate questions about the baby factory situation, and they are to ensure that these scenes are strong enough to arouse emotion. When they are ready, the groups should settle down and start to put their plays together, discussing, shaping and rehearsing them. Each group is assisted by facilitators.

**Exploration**

During the exploratory stage participants go across the streets to ask passers-by and members of the larger community questions based on their generative themes and the baby factory in general. The information they gather are further discussed.

**Discussion**

Participants discuss the facts they have gathered from their various outings. This session can sometimes get out of control so facilitators should intervene when discussions sessions become
rowdy. Some participants can shout at the tops of their voices as each one would want to be heard and to have his or her ideas welcomed. Group facilitators should step in to control the situation when this happens.

**Shaping**

The shaping stage is when participants refine their ideas based on the film they have watched. They should polish their codes (plays) by trying to put together a proper narrative that flow without distractions or unnecessary details. In this process the facilitators can assist the various groups to decide on what to be retained or discarded. The facilitator should also encourage participants to consider why they want to discard ideas. This is followed by a period of rehearsals when the participants rehearse their code ensuring that it is well lined up, coherent and that it flows in a sequential manner.

**Presentation**

Performers should be free to use any language, costumes and props. The maximum time for a code is five minutes. At the conclusion of the performances the participants are always very pleased with themselves. The response from the crowd who naturally come around as soon as the film or performance start, will be fun for them.

As soon as the performance ends, the participants are to settle down for the analysis with their facilitators. Those who acted will discuss their roles in the plays, and those who did not act will discuss their observations of the events. After this the participants can assemble for the general analysis of each code (play)
These codes are supposedly based on the film they watched, “Disposable Womb”. When the discussions end, facilitators will lead the participants through a series of analytical discussions about the film (“Disposable Womb”) and plays. The purpose is to get to the root causes of the problems for instance, issues surrounding baby factory.

**Analysis**

The facilitators can ask each participant to describe the play they have generated from watching “Disposable Womb”, either as an observer or as a participant. They also answer questions about what they felt as they acted their roles or, if they had been observers, what they felt as they watched the plays. At this stage, the Facilitators should introduce David Werner’s “But why?” method (Werner et al., 1992) in probing the participants, who are asked:

“What were you doing playing … [a particular role]?”

“Why did you do this?” or

“Why did you do that?”

At this stage, the facilitators helps the participants to move from observation into thinking about their actions.

**Real Life Experience**

At the end of this session the participants will be fully involved in the process. Their attention by now will focused on the main issues. The facilitators should ask, “Does this happen in real life?” In most cases the participants will answer yes. Then they are asked to relate similar life experiences as was portrayed in the film or code, this is usually a lengthy process as participants take time to narrate, in detail, life situations of personal experiences or what they heard or saw happened to
others. At this stage it is obvious that the reality of the lives of pregnant teenagers, baby factory or cultural practices against women suddenly dawn on them.

**Root Causes**

The facilitators then challenge the participants to find the root causes of these problems. They use the “But why?” method (Werner et al. 1992). For instance, for teenage pregnancy, the participants can be asked why the girl became pregnant. For example:

“Why are you pregnant?”

“Because I dropped out of school.”

“But why?”

“My father refused to send me to school.

“But why?”

“Because my father could not afford to train all his children.”

“But why?”

“He has plenty children and we are all girls.”

“But why?”

“He said girls should be trained by their husbands.”

“But why?”

“That is our culture.”

The participants will discover that the bottom line for all the problems is cultural belief and maybe poverty. They can ask other questions for instance: Why does the baby factory have continuous patronage by women? Why is it difficult to shut down the baby factories? After this session the facilitators should move on to the action planning session.
**Action Planning**

By this time participants are ready for transformation (i.e., for thinking about solutions to their problems), the facilitators will ask the participants what they can do about the situation that they’ve found themselves in. The participants will be asked to go back to their groups and discuss actions that can be taken to improve the different situations. After the discussions, the groups should come together, and each group leader share their group’s ideas about actions that might be taken to help alleviate the problems depicted in the codes.

In concluding this process, it is important to stress that TfD work with adults can be challenging. Much of the engagements can be categorized as participatory research. In preparing the plays, the participants collect information which they analyze for further discussions; they verify the information and prioritize problems that they want to address. Subsequently the participants decide on the content of their plays and the performance style. After their performances they sit down and start discussing possible solutions to their problems. During the whole process they have the expertise and the primary knowledge necessary to address their identified problems (baby factory). The most important role of the facilitators in this project, as in any effective participatory learning process, is to “facilitate the learning process of participants through promoting exposure and sharing the analysis of participants’ experiences” (van Beers 2002, 36).

When doing this research, analysis is the most difficult activity; it requires time, patience and creativity. In TfD process, participants are found to be well capable of analyzing even complex information. The project constitutes action research aimed at helping communities to come up with practical solutions for the problems associated with, for example baby factory.
3.5.15. Feminist Epistemological and Ontological Assumption

The methodology used in this project is informed by feminist epistemology. This is the foundation upon which the project is built, which in a way is different from traditional epistemology. For the purpose of this project, feminist epistemology (study of knowledge and how people come to know what they know (Johnson 1995: 95)) is defined as “women’s experiences”, or “women’s knowledge” (Alcoff & Potter, 1993:1) and women’s realities.

Feminists may not agree how precisely to shape or define feminist project, but there is a high degree of concurrence over the epistemological grounding of the research process. Judith Cook and Mary Margaret Fonow (1986) identify five basic epistemological principles in feminist methodology. These include the taking of women and gender as the focus of analysis; the importance of consciousness raising; the rejection of subject and object (this means valuing the knowledge held by the participant as being expert knowledge and acknowledging how research valued as "objective" always reflects a specific social and historical standpoint; a concern with ethics (throughout the research process and in the use of research results); and an intention to empower women and change power relations and inequality.

The basic assumptions for this project are in line with assumptions of feminist paradigms that is, 1. All research is value-sustaining and feminist research is politicised inquiry. 2. The separation between the subject and the object does not lead to objectivity, and a closer connection between the two may reconcile subjectivity and objectivity. 3. Women’s experience can be considered a source and justification of knowledge. 4. Truth and objectivity will depend on the moral lens through which the audience see this. As the screenwriter the intent is to tilt audience moral conscience into advocacy action. The overall assumption is that the play as
written conveys authentically the advocacy intent without been immersed in undue analysis. Based on the above, this thesis therefore challenges the dominant perception that teenage pregnancy and infertile married women carries socio-cultural biases.

In contextualizing objects, subject and knowledge in this project, I identify my subject as people who have been taken advantage of because of their socio-economic situation, age, low educational attainment and ignorance, about baby factory. In this regard, in the play, my authorial voice did not indicate hierarchical relationship. Emotions is seen as valuable aspects of the play. The contextualizations of “objectivity” and “subjectivity” as binaries or dichotomies does not occur in the play, and the existence of realities of the subject is considered. The play shows a consciousness of issues surrounding authority and power in the baby factory enterprise.

Strategies to address the hierarchical power relationship between myself as the writer, the characters and my audience, particularly young girls, using participatory research methods are included. This is because hierarchical power relationship can influence research decisions. The goal is to empower the audience and characters/participants to have an active voice in the research. This process will also put marginalized young girls in a position as valuable and experienced knowers of their own lives.

The object of this project is in the context of economic exploitation and cultural pressures. The knowledge is in the context of the information gathered to write the screen

3.5.16 Limitations and Ethical Issues

The major limitation of this project is that the baby factory is operated ‘under cover’ as a ‘black market’ industry. This makes it difficult to obtain information openly from clients of the
factory. The television coverage of incidence when they were broken into by law enforcement agencies, gives vivid pictures of these factories.

Identifying ethical issues in this project is a bit tricky the major part of the project is a screen play. However, in the screen play, attempts to create reality would result in having to define power boundaries, in this case. The characters are be seen navigating the ethical blame docket for audience to make their own ethical judgment. This is because each character comes forward to justify their actions and this becomes an ethical dilemma.
4 RESULTS: THE SCREENPLAY

4.1 Title Of Screenplay

“DISPOSABLE WOMB”
4.2 Synopsis

DISPOSABLE WOMB is a story about Zona, a high-school graduate, set-in present-day Nigeria. Zona, the daughter of Idah and Mina, is admitted to study medicine in England. As she prepares to travel, she discovers that she is nine weeks pregnant. This devastates Zona. Immediately she proceeds to tell her ‘boyfriend’ Nosa, about this development. In the process, Zona is kidnapped, blindfolded and taken to the Baby factory in the middle of a forest. When the blindfold is removed from her face, she is shocked to see many young girls, some at different stages of pregnancy, and others who are not pregnant, all cramped into a dingy room. Here she is shocked to discover that Nosa is a criminal in the baby factory kidnapping gang who impregnate girls at will, to produce ‘commodities’ for their baby factory. At this stage she realizes that she is in trouble. She pleads with Nosa to contact her parents, instead; he assaults her and disregards her plea. At night, Nosa and his gang rape the girls at this squalor of a baby factory. Ironically, Zona’s aunty, Yuwa is been tormented by her husband, Robosa and mother-in-law, Iro because she is childless. As a result, she is eventually driven out of her home. Zona and her friends make two attempts to escape, but Nosa and his gang foils their attempts and intercept them. They return Zona and her friends to the factory. On one of such occasions, one of the girls is shot dead as she tries to escape. Eventually, Zona escapes from the factory with her longtime childhood friend Ede, whom she reconnects with at the baby factory. While on the run, Zona falls into labor and she delivers a baby. Nosa who has been searching for them, stumbles on Zona who is recovering from child birth stress, he kidnaps her baby. As they continue their escape, Zona and Ede are kidnapped again by the deadly Fulani militia. Fortunately, the police arrive on the scene and they are released. The Policemen also catch up with Nosa and they take hold of the baby.
Nosa is short dead as he attempts to escape. Zona reunites with her parents, and gives Yuwa her baby as her adopted child.
TITILE OF FILM: DISPOSABLE WOMB

Irene Agunloye
CAST LIST

ZONA: The protagonist: Seventeen year old girl

MINA: Zona’s Mother

IDAH: Zona’s father

UYI: Zona’s brother

NETE: Zona’s elder sister

YUWA: Idah’s sister

ROBOSA: Yuwa’s husband

IRO: Robosa’s husband

IVIE: Yuwa’s friend

DR. TOSA: Idah’s family doctor

NOSA: Antagonist, a young man in his late twenties

GHOSA: Baby Factory worker

IYAMU: Nosa’s friend

EDE: Zona’s friend

YABA: Victim in baby factory

TAMA: Victim in Baby Factory

RUNA: Victim in Baby Factory

NUWA: Victim in Baby Factory

ODEH: Idah’s family driver

NEWSCASTER

NURSE: Nurse in Dr. Tosa’s hospital
POLICE 1

POLICE 2

HUSBAND: Sede’s husband

NURSES, POLICEMEN & WOMEN, FULANI ARMED BANDITS, PREGNANT YOUNG GIRLS, MEN IN BABY FACTORY, PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL
EXT. IN THE FOREST-MORNING

The scene opens with a close-up on a newborn baby. He is wrapped in an old tattered wrapper. The baby is crying. Cut to a slow motion of a man running from the eastern end of the forest stretching his left hand in an attempt to snatch the baby, a woman in her late thirties is also racing from the western end of the forest, stretching out her left hand attempting to grab the baby, and a young girl of 17 is also racing from the southern end of the forest trying to intersect the two people, she stretches out her right hand towards the baby in an attempt to take possession of him.

EXT. UNDER A BIG MANGO TREE- MORNING

ZONA, a beautiful girl of 17 Years, with a slight limp on her left leg which is hardly noticeable, she has dimples on both sides of her cheeks, she is wearing a pair of jeans pants and casual top, soft spoken, is standing behind YUWA, a middle age woman in her late-thirties, she is tall, elegant with a melancholic look. She ties a single wrapper with a matching blouse on top. Zona is braiding Yuwa’s hair under a big mango tree behind Yuwa’s house. Yuwa is sitting on a chair glossing through a Christian magazine: “Miracles are real”. Her legs are resting on a low stool, her toes which are badly in need of pedicure, are exposed.

Zona is just concluding the braiding, she examines the ends of the braids as if to determine the best way to secure them. Yuwa who is also admiring the braids from her mirror, passes a threaded needle stretching her hand backwards above her ear to Zona. She freaks out as she sees the needle, jumping back and shouting.

ZONA
No, no, I don’t want that, take it away. Take it away.

Yuwa Runs after her in an attempt to stop her.

YUWA
Zona stop. I’m sorry princess.
She catches up with Zona, nestles her in her arms and pulls a chair for her to sit down. Zona drops her chin into her cupped hand, expels her breath laboriously.

**YUWA (CONT’D)**
Zona, I thought you have outgrown this.

Yuwa, holds Zona’s face in between her palm, and gives her a reassuring peck. Zona responds with a smile.

**YUWA (CONT’D)**
Zona, are you alright? Are you sure we can continue?

Zona mutely nods her head and smiles shyly.

**ZONA**
I am fine Aunty.

Zona rises from her seat; she returns to her position behind Yuwa’s chair

**ZONA (CONT’D)**
I’m fine Aunty.

Yuwa gives Zona a box of matches and a candle. Zona lights the candle and gradually begins to wax the ends of the braids. As she does this, Yuwa picks up the mirror to admire her braids again, she nods her head in approval, smiles and touches Zona’s hand. Zona smiles in return.

**ROBOSA**, a man in his mid-forties, dark skin, tall and good looking, burst into the house shouting. He is accompanied by his mother, **IRO**, an aging gray haired woman in her late sixties, tall, agile, with an aggressive fierce look. His sister, **SEDE** a woman in her early thirties, she is, dark skin, of average height, pretty, with an amiable countenance is with them.

**ROBOSA (O.C.)**
Where is she? Where is the barren women?
Where is that witch called Yuwa?

Iro follows Robosa closely, tapping her palm against her open mouth, creating a shaming sound of whooooo, whoooooo, whoooo, with her head slanted to the right.

**IRO (O.C.)**
Your time is up barren woman. Your years of marriage to my son has just expired. Your expiry date is today, right now..

Yuwa and Zona rush to enter the house from the back door to see what is happening. They try to open the door but the door is locked. They run along the side of the house in an attempt to get to the front door, only to find Robosa and Iro are throwing out her suit cases and her other belongings. She rushes to hold her husband trying to stop him, he pushes her away from him and she starts weeping, runs after him, she holds him by the waist. He kicks her using his heel.

Zona tries to stop Robosa from assaulting Yuwa, she runs between Robosa and Iro begging them, robbing her palms together. Robosa pushes her aside and she falls against a bench, Yuwa is alarmed, she runs to Zona and lifts her up,

**YUWA**
What is happening Robby? Is all well? Are you in your right senses?

**IRO**
Hey, hey, so my son is insane, ehn? Why wont he be insane, your childlessness has brought him insanity abi? Leave my son alone. Go, get out of this environment so that my son can regain his sanity.

**ROBOSA**
Iye, leave her alone.

Turning to Yuwa

**ROBOSA (CONT’D)**
Very soon I will exhibit my insanity for you to see.

Yuwa and Zona are on their knees, weeping and pleading. Yuwa crawls on her knees to hold Iro, she pushes her away. She runs to her husband, he also pushes her away.

**YUWA**
Robby, why are you doing this to me? After all we have been through together? Tell me Robby, what offence did I commit to warrant this treatment.

ROBOSA
You are childless.

YUWA
Robby, is childlessness a sin? Is it an offence?

IRO
Yes, in Nigeria, it is a sin. It is a big offence.

YUWA
Robby, Why this fuss? The Doctor says there is nothing wrong with me and that we would have children.

IRO
That is a mere diagnosis. I have heard that over and over again for the past twelve years. If nothing is wrong with you why can’t you become pregnant?

ZONA
Uncle Rob, what is the meaning of this display? Why are you doing this to my aunty? You are treating her like a criminal.

ROBOSA
Of course she is a criminal. Guilty of childlessness. Your Aunty is barren. Is that not a crime? She has never been pregnant. Never missed her period once since I married her.

IRO
Look at her witch, she ate all the babies in her womb, now she is attempting to inflict my son with insanity.

Iro claps her hands and makes the shaming sound whooo whooo again

IRO (CONT’D)
Leave my son’s house Yuwa, your time is up.
Return to your father’s house, barren woman.

ROBOSA
I am tired of been childless. I want to hear the cry of babies in this home. I have tried, twelve good years of leaving with a wife I thought is a woman.

He pushes Zona out of his way and attempts to return to the door, Zona blocks his way.

As Iro packs more of Yuwa’s clothes to throw outside, Sede struggles to retrieve them from her.

SEDE
Iye, you can’t do this to Yuwa. Have you forgotten so soon all that she has done for this family?

IRO
That is history. Sede, I am concerned about now, today and tomorrow. Your brother is forty-five years old and has no child. Does that not boarder you? Get out of my way.

Pushes Sede aside.

SEDE
Iye, I am surprised at you. Have you forgotten that you are an advocate for women, the leader of the market women?

IRO
Market what? We are talking about my son and you bring up the market women. Will my leadership of the market women give my son a child? Ya tota. Get out of my way.

Yuwa who has been watching and pleading, suddenly jumps up and falls to the ground wailing. As she does this, her wrapper falls exposing her waist slip. Zona is all over her, trying to tie her wrapper on her waist. She sits on the ground with her, and places her head on her laps, and she wipes Yuwa’s tears with the back of her palm.
ACT 1 SCENE 2

INT: ZONA’S BEDROOM- DAY

Zona’s room, there are pictures of Zona at different stages of her life on the wall. The big gold photo frame of her recent graduation from High school stands out on the wall. Two suit cases are opened on Zona’s bed. MINA, Zona’s mother, a woman in her early fifties, with a gap between her front set of teeth, of average weight, is helping Zona to bring out her clothes from the closet. Zona selects the ones she wants, and Mina returns the others.

MINA
Zona, why didn’t you encourage Yuwa to come over here with you? After all she grew up in this house with us. She is like my child.

ZONA
Sede prevailed on her brother and mother to allow her stay in the house.

Zona pauses a moment in thought and finally shook her head slowly.

ZONA (CONT’D)
Mum, why all this fuss about aunty Yuwa’s infertility? After seeing what Aunty Yuwa went through I am more resolved to study medicine. I will return to open a fertility clinic.

Mina claps for her.

MINA
That’s my girl. Go for it. I will give you all the support that you need.

Moves closer to her and then places her hand on her shoulder.

MINA (CONT’D)
As a gynecologist, I see women daily who are always so desperate for the fruit of the womb that
they can do anything or pay any price just to have a baby and become a mother.

**ZONA**
Mummy, I understand why. I can imagine witnessing the scene in Aunty Yuwa’s house today, paints me a picture of what you are talking about.

**MINA**
Funny enough in most of these cases, its the men that have fertility problem.

Zona opens her mouth.

**ZONA**
Really? Why are the women always blamed for infertility?

**MINA**
The men never agree to be investigated. Culturally, infertility is seen as a woman’s problems.

**ZONA**
Mummy am more determined to study medicine. When I return, I will partner with a urologist, so that when there are issues of infertility, both the woman and the man will be investigated together at the same time.

Mina laughs softly. Gives her a thumb up.

**IDAH**, Zona’s father enters, he is in his mid-fifties, dark skin with athletic frame. He looks younger than his age. He stands by the door, with a broad smile on his face. He flashes Zona’s international passport and some papers in the air, and then walks over to embrace his daughter, Zona.

**IDAH**
Congratulation Zona!

He hands Zona her passport and some papers.

Your visa at last!! Your SSCE result has also been released. Six As and one B. That is not the end,
Leeds University eventually changed your admission from Dentistry to Medicine. I am proud of you my dear.

Zona jumps up in excitement, stretches up on her toes and loops her arms over his shoulders and gives him a peck on his check. She then embraces him and then her mother. Idah gives her the itinerary for her trip.

IDAH (CONT’D)
And your itinerary my princess. You are good to go.

MINA
You see, it is good to walk by faith.

IDAH
That was a big risk, what if we didn’t get her visa? You would have forfeited your money to Rodex Airways. Anyway by this time tomorrow Zona will be on her way to United Kingdom, University of Leeds to study Medicine.

Kneeling with her hands lifted up high and her face looking up

MINA
Wonderful God, I praise You! To you alone be all the glory. We can never thank you enough.

FADE OUT.

ACT 1 SCENE 3

INT. ZONA’S FAMILY DINNING ROOM- DAY

Idah and his entire family are seated at the dining table. Idah is seated at the head of the table, and Mina is seated next to him. UYI, Zona’s younger brother, a boy of 12 years, looking bigger than his age, has a friendly disposition, sits close to Mina. Zona sits at the other side of her dad. NETE, 20 years old girl, Zona’s elder sister, she is slim, very well shaped, sits next to Zona.
The dining room opens up to an adjoining living room. The television is within view, Idah picks the remote control and tries to change the channel, he freezes as the NEWSCASTER, a pretty young lady of about 30 years, dressed in bold Ankara print top and long skirt [African wax print] with a well tied gele [head gear] comes up with the Breaking News. This attracts the attention of the entire family.

NEWSCASTER
The Police Public Relations Officer has announced that there is a new dimension to kidnapping in the country. Kidnapping gangs are now operating in many cities. (MORE)

NEWSCASTER (CONT’D)
Their targets are young girls between 13 and 25 years, whom they kidnap and take to a so-called baby factory where they are made to breed children for the operators who sell these babies at exorbitant prices. Young pregnant girls in need of shelter are also their victims.

Idah who is sipping a drink from his cup as he mused on the lady’s announcement, drops his cup gently and turns to his daughters.

IDAH
Young ladies that's a warning for you. Be careful. Especially you Nete, I hear of your waker, waker on campus. Be warned.

Nete, frowns. Zona excuses herself from the table, she is followed by Uyi. She goes to her bathroom and throw up. Uyi is scared, runs out and returns with Mina. Mina rubs her back as she continues to throw up.

MINA
I thought this malaria fever had been treated. i don’t think it is gone completely. You have to go back to Dr. Tosa to review your case.

She steps out to the living room where the others are seated in front of the television.

MINA (CONT’D)
Nete, please call Mr. Odeh quickly. He has to take Zona to see Dr. Tosa.
Idah rises from his chair.

**IDAH**
What is the matter? Is my princess alright?

**MINA**
She is fine, I think the malaria has not totally cleared.

**IDAH**
In that case she has to do another round of tests. She can’t travel tomorrow without the doctor getting to the bottom of this.

Enter ODEH, the driver. A young man in his late twenties. Zona comes out dressed, looking pale and weak.

**MINA**
Mr. Odeh, take Zona to Dr. Tosa’s office, and bring her back quickly.

Turning to Zona

**MINA (CONT’D)**

Zona, don’t waste time, you’ve got your shopping to do, and the braiding of your hair.

Uyi Clings to Zona

**UYI**
Mum, can I accompany Zona to the doctor’s office?

**MINA**
No, not this time dear.

She pulls Uyi from Zona, Zona looks at her mother, pleading with her eyes for Uyi. Mina ignores her plea. Just as Zona is set to leave, a loud bang comes from the front door. Mr. Odeh opens the door and Yuwa flies in wailing.

**YUWA**
He has sent me packing oooo!

IDAH
Again? I thought you had resolved the issues.

Yuwa throws herself on the ground, crying and Zona rushes to embrace her crying with her. Idah immediately tries to pacify both his daughter and sister. He takes Yuwa to an inner room and Zona leaves with Mr. Odeh.

FADE OUT.

ACT 1 SCENE 4

INT. YUWA/ROBOSA’S HOME DAY

Sede opens the door to Yuwa’s home and finds her mother, Iro, and her brother Robosa in the living room discussing. She enters fuming and tries to control herself by walking aimlessly around before greeting her mum and brother, who obviously ignore her presence by carrying on with their conversation. This further infuriates her.

SEDE
Is anybody in this house?

IRO
Are you blind?

SEDE
No Iye, I am not. I needed to get your attention.

IRO
Now that you have our attention, what brings you here so early this morning? Are you not supposed to be at work?

SEDE
Yes, Iye, is my brother not supposed to be at work too? I have taken the today off.

IRO
I see.
SEDE
Iye, where is Yuwa?

IRO
She has left for her parents house for good.

Her voice is fraught with tension.

SEDE
Mum, that is uncalled for. It is unfair. Has it ever occurred to you that Yuwa could have been your daughter?

Robosa moves swiftly to Sede, bends low to look into her eyes.

ROBOSA
Mind your tongue young lady, this is my house, so I take whatever decisions I want.

Sede rises from her chair to confront him, lifting her chin, and looking up at him, straight into his eyes.

SEDE
Not so big brother, you are wrong. The house belongs to both of you. In any case, It is obvious that you are not the one in control of decision making here, your mother is.

She points at Iro.

IRO
What do you mean Omosede?

SEDE
Exactly what I have said. You are the one fermenting trouble here. They have lived peacefully for twelve years, now you’ve come to instigate your son, to send her away. Iye, that is unfair.

Iro launch forward in her chair, propping her big arms upon her own flesh as she carefully chooses her words.

IRO
Omosede what do mean? That I should allow my only son to go childless all the days of his life? So you want the blood of your ancestors to clot in his vein?

SEDE
Who cares about dead ancestors?

Iro rises and starts yelling, and pouncing around the living room.

IRO
Hey, hey, hey, hey....

Pointing at her mother’s display with a wave of hand.

SEDE
Mama, what is all this drama about. There is no need for this.

SEDE (CONT’D)
Have you ever considered the fact that your son could be the one with infertility issues?

Iro pounces on her and slaps her on her face. The impact pushes Sede down into a chair. She places her hand on her slapped face bowing her head for a moment, she eventually rises, Robosa rushes to her side and examines the face, gives his mum a stern look and shakes his head. He pats Sede on the back.

SEDE (CONT’D)
Iye, you slapped me?

Iro is still fuming.

IRO
Yes, and I will slap you again and again if you don’t shut your big mouth. Has your brother not tried? Twelve years, twelve years of living with a man she thought is woman.

SEDE
Iye that is so unfair. Has my brother ever gone for any test? He could be a woman too.

Iro rushes to slap her but Robosa comes in between them. He holds the mother and the slap mistakenly lands on his face. Sede eyes are flawed with instant anger. She flies out of the house holding her flare ankara skirt in place.

FADE OUT.

ACT 1 SCENE 5

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE. DAY

Dr. TOSA, an elderly man in his late fifties, there are few grey hair scattered around his head, he has his white doctor’s coat on, and is seated in front of a desk in his office. He has a stethoscope round his neck, there is a sphygmomanometer and other medical tools on his table. Zona is seated in front of Dr. Tosa.

DR. TOSA
Young lady what brings you here this time? You look so pale; your father says you are leaving for UK tomorrow. Congratulations!

ZONA
Thank you Doctor, I have been ill for some days now, I am feverish in the mornings and evenings, I feel sick, in fact I threw up this morning.

Dr. Tosa examines her eyes, tongue and presses the bell on his table, a NURSE, a woman of 35, enters. Dr. Tosa scribbles on a pad, tears off the page and hands it over to the nurse.

DR. TOSA
Zona go with her, she will carry out a couple of tests, then we will know exactly what the problem is, and take it from there.

ZONA
Okay sir. Thank you.

Zona follows the nurse into the treatment room. The Nurse ties a tunicae around her hand, as the she brings out a needle to pierce Zona’s vein so she can draw blood for the test, Zona freaks out, she flies out of the treatment room. The Nurse runs after her shouting for help. It takes two security men to bring her back to the treatment room. Then the Nurse continues with the test.

**NURSE**
Zona what is the matter with you? Why are you freaking out because of a mere needle?

**ZONA**
A mere needle? This your mere needle is the reason why I limp slightly on my left leg.

Nurse stops the work she is doing briefly, and looks at her with a querying face.

**NURSE**
Do you limp? I didn’t notice. What happened?

**ZONA**
When I was six years old, a nurse injected me on the wrong spot, and it affected my sciatic nerve.

**NURSE**
Oh my God! Sorry about that.

She puts her hand around her shoulder. She collects the required amount of her blood sample and quickly conducts the test.

**NURSE (CONT’D)**
Zona, you are safe with us here. We are very careful. Your result is ready. Lets go over to Dr. Tosa.

They both enter to Dr. Tosa’s office. The Nurse hands the result to Dr. Tosa. He motions to Zona to sit down. The nurse leaves the room. As he reads the result, he scratches his beard, opens his eyes wide, and shakes his head. He slowly drops the paper on the table.

**DR. TOSA**
Zona, you have been tested positive for pregnancy. You are 9 weeks pregnant.
Zona is alarmed, she opens her mouth wide, picks up the test result from the table, her shoulders drop slightly as she struggles against the grip of disappointment. She reads it and she slams into her seat. Dejectedly, she slumps forward again, as if in great sorrow. She suddenly stands up as if in a trance, scans through the test result and then sits back in her chair with a disgruntled sigh.

ZONA
Lord, what have I done to myself? I have failed God; I have failed mum and dad. Where do I go from here?

Zona bows her head and gradually rises from her seat and pauses, then suddenly she rushes out of the doctor’s office, crying.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 1

EXT. CAR PARK DAY

Zona rushes towards her dad’s car, a grey Toyota Highlander SUV, with Odeh sitting behind the wheel.

ZONA
Mr. Odeh, move the car quickly and take me to...

She opens her bag, searches briskly through the stuff in it and pulls out her address book and quickly flips through the pages.

ZONA (CONT’D)
27, Shaka Road. Hurry drive as careful and as quickly as you can.

ODEH
Yes, ma. Shaka be the street after Samora street, e no far at all, na only 5 minutes to reach there.

ZONA
Okay, do it fast then.
As they make the short drive, Zona bows her head down, muttering some words to herself.

ODEH
_Aunty Zona, we done reach oo. Make I wait or make I park?_

ZONA
Go, I will find my way when I am done.

ODEH
_But Mummy say make we no tay oo._

ZONA
Mr. Odeh, just go, go and leave me alone, go home. Tell Mummy, I will be home shortly.

ODEH
Okay oo.

FADE OUT.

INT./EXT. FRONT PORCH OF NOSA’S HOUSE

As Odeh drives off, Zona looks lost, she looks at her watch and proceeds to knock frantically on a door. NOSA, a man in his late twenties, average height, with a firm built, wearing a jogging suit, opens the door slightly, Zona forces her way into the room, she is taken aback to see a girl, TAMA, about sixteen years, pretty and very slim, she has a pair of jeans, and a loose top on. She is stretched out on the sofa.

Zona heaves a lengthy sigh and begins to pace the narrow confines of the living room. Nosa closes the door and invites Zona to take a chair. Zona ignores him.

ZONA
Can we talk?

NOSA
Talk? About what?

ZONA
About what?
Zona is agitated, she is close to tears. Nosa motions the girl on the sofa to leave the living room. She leaves reluctantly, casting Zona a suspicious look. As she leaves, Zona sits on a chair, tears streaming down her cheeks.

NOSA
What is the problem?

ZONA
I am pregnant!

Nosa smiles awkwardly, baring his uneven teeth.

NOSA
Pregnant? Is that why you are crying? It’s not the end of the world. We will take care of the situation.

Zona sits forward at the edge of her chair.

ZONA
How? Nosa, my life is falling apart. I warned you, but you wouldn’t listen to me, you forced yourself on me. Now see the result. How will I face my parents? God help me.

She lift up her hands in the air and let them fall on her head.

NOSA
Calm down Zona everything will be okay. I’ll fix it. I always do.

The Tama is peeping through the key hole and listening to their conversation. She is alarmed, and places both her palms on her mouth as she listens to the conversation.

NOSA (CONT’D)
Give me a minute, I will be back soon. Relax I will fix everything as soon as I return.

Nosa rushes out of the house, locks the door, securing it with another burglary door. Tama peeps, and she sees Zona sitting alone, she opens the door, and enters the living room, and approach Zona with a broad friendly smile. Zona’s eyes avoids her for a moment. Tama stretches out her hand to shake Zona. She does not respond.

TAMA
I am Nitamosa, Tama for short. I listened to your conversation with that man, I can't even remember his name.

Zona sweeps her gaze upwards.

**ZONA**
His name is Nosa. My name is Zona. Why are you here feeling so relaxed if you don’t know him too well?

She jerks her head forward to enforce her words.

**TAMA**
He said he will give me a job at a nursery school. Zona, I am pregnant for him too!

**ZONA**

Zona questions anxiously, lifting up her nose in an aloof snub, but Tama ignores her attitude.

**TAMA**
Zona, I don’t think this man can be trusted. I came here desperately looking for a job to fend for myself, he deceived me and forced himself on me. Now I am pregnant and he says he will fix it, just like he told you. Fix what Zona?

ZONA is lost in thought, she suddenly recovers.

**ZONA**
Tama, we are in trouble. What do we do? I think we should...

The front door suddenly burst open and Nosa rushes in the company of two hefty and rough looking men. He is surprised to see Zona and Tama sitting together. Zona and Tama exchange glances, Zona opens her mouth, surprise, her eyes widens in fear as the men approach her. Nosa steps ahead of them and takes Zona’s hand, gives her a reassuring peck on the head, he walks her and Tama out of the house to a waiting car.
ACT 2 SCENE 2

INT./EXT. A RAMSHACKLE BUILDING INSIDE THE FOREST (BABY FACTORY)
NIGHT

Nosa opens the door of the car, pulling out Zona and Tama blindfolded, and he leads them inside the building. As they enter, Nosa releases his grip on their hands. He removes the blind folds. After he does this, Zona blinks her eyes several times, trying to regain her sight properly. She leans her head back and allow her eyelids sink half-closed as she surveys the environment that surrounds her.

There are over twenty young girls in the small room, while some are in different stages of pregnancy, others show no sign of pregnancy. Zona immediately identifies EDE, her classmate, a young pretty girl of seventeen, dark skin, plump. Ede is weeping bitterly. She rushes at Nosa, who slaps and pushes her away from him. Zona steps in to support Ede.

EDE
Nosa, you are wicked. You are a demon. You told me you were taking me to Europe to learn hair dressing, is this your saloon? Is this Turin?

Another pregnant girl jumps out.

RUNA
Oh, was that what he told you? Ah, liar, he told me that me he was taking me to a makeup school in Lagos. Indeed, you have made me up.

Runa rubs her stomach.

Zona shakes her head and sighs. She holds her head with her hands and opens her mouth in fear and shock. Another girl who is about eighteen years old, in advanced stage of pregnancy drags herself out crying.

YABA
So this man deceived all of us. Mine was a love story. He told me he would marry me but wanted me to be educated first. He said he would take me to
University of Ibadan where his uncle is the Vice-Chancellor. Ah, marriage indeed.

Zona collapses, Ede and Tama rush to her side, Ede cuddles her in her arms.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 3

INT. LIVING ROOM EVENING

Mina is sitting down and looking worried, she drops her chin into her cupped hand. Idah is pacing up and down the living room. Uyi enters.

IDAH
Is Odeh ready?

UYI
Yes daddy, he is waiting in the car. Daddy can I accompany will you?

IDAH
No son don’t worry Zona will be fine. Your mathematics lesson teacher is already here. Go to your teacher and don’t keep him waiting.

Uyi leaves. As Idah and Mina prepares to step out, Mina heaves a sigh and moves to hold her husband, stretch up on her toes, and loops her hands over his shoulders.

MINA
Darl, why don’t we call Dr. Tosa to find out what transpired in his clinic.

IDAH
Yes, you’re correct. We should have done that since.

Idah removes his telephone from his pocket and dials Dr. Tosa’s Number. He places the phone on his ears, as soon as Dr. Tosa picks, he responds.

IDAH (CONT’D)
Hello, is that Dr. Tosa?

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
Oh thank you. We are wondering what the problem is with Zona. The Driver said she was in a very bad mood when she left your office.

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
What? Nine weeks pregnant? For who? How come?

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
No problem. But where is she right now? She is to travel by 6 am tomorrow.

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
No, I wont do such a thing. She has made her choice. Thanks Dr. Tosa. Good night.

He drops his phone in his shirt pocket, wipes his ears and shakes his head slowly. He sits down next to Mina.

Nete tiptoes into the living room and stops to listen to the father’s conversation with Dr. Tosa.

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
Well, you have heard it all, your daughter is pregnant.

**MINA**
My daughter is what?

He glares his anger at Mina.

**IDAH**
Are you deaf? I said your daughter is pregnant.

A long wavering sigh slips from Idah, seeming to deflate his spirit even more.

**IDAH (CONT’D)**
I warned you on several occasions to monitor these children’s movement, no you would
rather stay at work all day performing surgery, Madam Surgeon, now someone else has performed surgery on your daughter.

Idah pauses and turns to glance sideways at Mina

IDAH (CONTD)

Madam doctor what do you have to say?

Mina burst into tears, gets up and makes for the door.

NETE

Daddy, this is not the time to apportion blame. Our main concerned now should be Zona’s safety. Dad, have you informed the police?

Idah nods mutely with another laborious expelling of breath. He taps his hand on the side of his face, displaying a bad state of despair.

IDAH

We contacted the police this afternoon after we left the house where Odeh said he took her to. The police is keeping a close watch on the house. I am in touch with them.

NETE

Daddy, I have a classmate at the University who is a policeman at the Special Investigation Unit. Can I ask him to assist us?

IDAH

Yes, certainly, help is never too much.

Mina breaks down crying. Nete cuddles her mother in her hands and wipes her tears. Idah joins them, pulls Mina to her feet and Mina nestles her head on his shoulder.

FADE OUT.
EXT. FOREST NEAR THE BABY FACTORY NIGHT

Zona, Ede, Tama and NUWA a seventeen year old girl, pretty and calm looking, tiptoe out of the baby factory into the forest. They start running.

ZONA
I can hear some noise. I think they are coming after us. Run as fast as you can sisters.

She commands with some urgency.

Nosa and three men run and overtake them. They beat them mercilessly, kicking, slapping and pushing them. Each of the men carries one of the girls. Nosa carries Zona, she kicks and kicks, bites and beats Nosa trying to release herself. Nosa slaps her. Tama, set herself loose and takes to her heels. Nosa, turns around swiftly to bring out his gun and he shoots her. Tama falls to the ground dead. Zona tries to run to her side cringing in trembling fear as she watches her give up the ghost.

ZONA (CONT’D) Tama,
Tama, are you okay?

Nosa restrains her. Pinning her down.

ZONA (CONT’D)
Get your hands off me you demon, murderer. You are evil.

She releases herself and attempts to run.

NOSA
Stop, or I shoot you as I have just done to your friend.

Zona stops to address him and continues to run.

ZONA
You dare, do you think I fear your gun? Is being dead not better than the assault that goes on there?
Points to the direction of the factory. Nosa overpowers her.

The men carry the girls into the building, lock up the doors and they assault all the girls sexually. Zona struggles out of the stronghold, she picks up a stick and begins to hit the men on top of the young girls. There is total confusion as some of the girls raise alarm. Zona opens up the window shouting.

\[\text{ZONA (CONT’D)}\]
\begin{quote}
Help! someone help us!! Help, we are in captivity. They have kidnapped us. They have killed our friend.
\end{quote}

Nosa rushes to her and covers her mouth. He slaps her several times. She falls down crying.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE  5

EXT. HOTEL CAR PARK DAY

IVIE, a dark skin woman in her late thirties, dressed in buba and iro. She is talking to a young girl of about 16 years who is visibly pregnant. Yuwa drives into the car parking lot and parks her car, she alights and walks away without noticing Ivie. Ivie cast a stare her way and seems to remember something but she continues talking to the girl.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY DAY

As Yuwa is collecting her key from the Front Desk, Ivie walks in, she taps Yuwa from the back. Yuwa turns around, tries to figure out the face, all of a sudden she remembers and she yells.

\[\text{YUWA}\]
\begin{quote}
Oh my God, Ivie! Where have you been all these years?
\end{quote}

\[\text{IVIE}\]
In this city, we went abroad for some years but we’ve been around.

**YUWA**

How are you? How is your family?

**IVIE**

We are fine. My children are in college, I have two, but my husband is late.

**YUWA**

Oh, I am so sorry about that.

**IVIE**

O, I have gotten over that long ago. What about you?

**YUWA**

Well am not as lucky, I don’t have children of my own. In fact that is why I am staying in this hotel.

**IVIE**

What do you mean? Do they give out children in this hotel?

**YUWA**

No, my husband sent me out of our home, because I am childless.

**IVIE**

Imagine, and you left, you are a fool. No Man can push me out of my home, a home we built together? Dem never born that man. *I go show am pepper. Oloshi.*

She demonstrates with body movements

**IVIE (CONT’D)**

*Ha, Yuwa you fall my hand o, so man drive you and you run comot. E be God? Jo go sit down*
YUWA
Ivie there was very little I could do, his mother
came from their town to throw me out.

IVIE
Throw you out? Are you trash? Fool, ode, you are a
fool, when my husband died the whole village came
to drive me out of our home, they said I killed their
brother.

YUWA
You mean it?

IVIE
Yes ooo. They all sat down and ordered me to park
out my things, and to give them all the papers to our
properties. I agreed and went into the room
pretending to oblige them. Immediately, I returned
with a gun, they all took to their heels never to return
again.

They both start laughing.

YUWA
That was dangerous.

IVIE
Yes, my dear dangerous moves require dangerous
actions. Before they could recover and head for the
court, I sold all the properties and went abroad to
cool off for two years.

YUWA
You must be a tough woman.

IVIE
The world has taught me to be tough dear. This your
case is a very simple one. I will fix you up and he
will come begging for you.

YUWA
How do we keep in touch?
IVIE
Keep in touch ke? You think I will leave you to be wasting your money in this hotel, and cry each night over one worthless man?

IVIE (CONT’D) No, you will go upstairs now to park your things. You are coming to leave in my house. By this same time next month you will be a mother.

YUWA
Ivie how? How Ivie? Am I virgin Mary? I don’t want anything dubious o.

IVIE
Sit down there express go pass you. Who dey do dubious tin? Me? I forgive you.

They embrace and laugh.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 6

INT. BEDROOM.NIGHT

Idah and Mina are in their bedroom. Mina props up herself with a pillow against the headboard of the bed. Her right hand is placed under her chin; occasionally she sighs, shakes her head and hisses, Idah sits on the bed backing Mina with his head bowed, and his palms entwined resting on his laps.

IDAH
Nearly seven months have passed and still no news of Zona. Where is my princess? My precious princess.

Mina is crying, Uyi enters the room and sits with his mother, wiping tears from her face.

UYI
Daddy, please, go find Zona. Tell the police to find her Daddy. I want my sister. Mummy please, don’t cry. I will call Nete to come and stay with you.

IDADH
Thanks, dear, we will find Zona. Everyone in the church is praying. Now, go to bed and sleep.

UYI
Okay, Daddy. Good night Mummy, good night Daddy. Daddy, please be nice to my mummy.

He hugs his Mummy and Daddy and leaves for his room. Idah moves over to sit with Mina and puts his hands around her shoulders, he strokes her face. She then rest her head on his shoulder.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 6

INT. A LIVING ROOM. DAY

Yuwa is seated with her suit cases piled up close to her, she is wearing a bou bou gown. Ivie picks up a newspaper on the floor and flips through, she suddenly stops and reads out the article, drawing Yuwa’s attention to it.

YUWA
Thanks, Ivie for this offer the hotel was beginning to clean out my bank account.

IVIE
I wonder why you refused to stay at your brother’s place.

YUWA
Ivievee, ha, don’t you know what my brother is going through with Zona missing? I can’t imagine
living in that house with Zona not there. The house reminds me of Zona.

They take Yuwa’s suit cases into the guest room and return to relax in the chairs.

IVIE
Yuwa, this may be of interest to you.

She passes the paper to Yuwa.

YUWA
What do you mean Ivie, that I should patronize these people? See the police has just raided them.

Points to the article.

YUWA (CONT’D)

These are criminals.

IVIE
It doesn’t matter. All we want is a baby.

YUWA
No Ivie, I will rather stay childless than patronize these criminals.

IVIE
Yuwa, they are not criminals, they are only trying to help women without babies.

YUWA
At the expense of young innocent girls?

IVIE
You argue too much. All you want is a child you can call your own.

YUWA
Ivie, I appreciate your concern, but, I will not be one of those perpetuating this evil.

Pointing to the paper on her laps
YUWA (CONT’D)
Simply because I want a child.

She rises to leave but Ivie stops her and whispers in her ears.

IVIE
I have their contact.

She brings out her phone and a small piece of paper from her bag, and begins to dial. She puts the phone on speaker. Yuwa raises her hand as if to stop Ivie, but Ivie ignores her and continue with her call.

IVIE (CONT’D)
Hello, please can I speak to Nosa.

NOSA (V.O.)
Yes, this is Nosa speaking.

IVIE
Good afternoon Nosa. I got your number from your former client, Mrs. Idehen.

NOSA (V.O.)
Oh yes, yes, she was our client. Oh, I remember, she told me about you. You are Madam Ivie right?

IVIE
Yes. Do you have any available?

NOSA (V.O.)
Yes, we have both cockerels and hens. We are expecting more. Some are due to hatch this week, some next week.

IVIE
How much do they cost?

NOSA (V.O.) Cockerels are 3.5, and hens 2.5.

IVIE
That’s too high. Any discount?
NOSA (V.O.)
That depends on the number you want.

IVIE
We will be there next week to make our choice.

NOSA (V.O.)
Please give me a call before coming so we can facilitate your passage. We operate under very tight security.

IVIE
Okay thanks. See you next week.

NOSA
You are welcome, I will expect you.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 8

INT. A ROOM IN BABY FACTORY. DAY

Seven months have passed, Zona is now heavily pregnant, she is in the company of fifteen other girls, ten of them are obviously pregnant, and three are not. They take different postures on the single mattress. Zona is standing, facing the girls and leaning her back against the wall.

ZONA
My sisters, we’ve had enough of this assault and hostility. The world must hear our story.

NUWA
How? Do you know where we are? A lonely house inside the forest. So how will the world hear our voices?

ZONA
That’s why we are here. Whenever there is a will, there is always a way. Since I have been held captive here for the past seven months, I have witnessed the murder or killings of four girls. Tomorrow it may be one of us seated here.

EDE
Girls lets listen to Zona oo, I remember we once had a similar incident in our school. A male teacher attempted to sexually assault one of our classmates, Zona hid in a corner and filmed the scene with her phone. As the teacher pulled down his pants, Zona shouted for help, and that is how that girl was delivered from the assault by the teacher.

RUNA
What happened after that?

ZONA
I reported the incident to the principal and the teacher was summoned by the State School Board.

EDE
He was later dismissed.

NUWA
hey, zona, please we are all ears, how can you lead us out of this captivity?

While some of the girls listen with knee interest, others listen but they are looking discouraged and afraid.

ZONA
Sisters, if we are determined to be set free, we can do it. Our destinies is in our hands. No one will fight our battles for us. We have to rise up and face the task masters squarely, or remain in captivity for ever.

NUWA
What if we are caught? Remember how we were brutalized the last time we attempted it. I don’t want to go through that again.
ZONA
We must keep trying.

YABA
I am scared. Its better to kill yourself than to be subjected to this incessant sexual abuse.

Some of the girls begin to cry. Yaba raises a dirge softly as she cries and leaves the room.

ZONA
We will not die. We will set our selves free and raise our voices for the world to hear our plight.

RUNA
Zona, I don’t see how this will work inside this forest.

ZONA
The forest is no barrier to our deliverance. I have a plan, if you are willing, wake up by 4.a.m & we will take it from there.

They put off the light and squeeze themselves haphazardly on the bed.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT 2 SCENE 9

INT/EXT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

There is screaming and wailing, confusion, commotion, the girls are running around, the men try to settle the girls down.

Zona is seated on the bed with her head bowed down, her left hand on her head and tears streaming down her cheeks. Ede is still sleeping, she is awakened by the noise, she jerks up and sits down. She sees Zona crying and is shocked.

EDE
Zona! Zona!!

Shaking her shoulder from the back.
EDE (CONT’D) What is the matter?

ZONA
Yaba is dead.

EDE
What? Who killed her?

ZONA
She stabbed herself with a kitchen knife.

EDE
Jesus, why, why?

ZONA
This is no time for questions. Ede we must leave now. Right now. We can’t call the others. The fewer the better. When we succeed, we’ll get help to release them?

Zona and Ede pack some items around the room and maneuver their way out through the back door in the midst of the confusion and wailing. As they enter the forest, they start running. After running for some time Zona becomes weak, they stop to rest. Ede who is also heavily pregnant, brings out a water bottle from the bag and gives to Zona. As she drinks, she nearly chokes and starts coughing. Ede hits her back lightly to aid her breathing.

EDE
Are you okay?

ZONA
Yes, I am fine. Thank you.

She takes a deep breath, in and out.

EDE
Zona where will this forest lead us to?

ZONA
Relax, we will get there.

EDE
Where Zona? I don’t think this was a wise decision considering our condition.

ZONA
Have faith. We will make it. God will direct us.

EDE
Zona, I don’t share your faith. Look at us in this wild forest.

ZONA
Let’s take one step at a time.

EDE
Very soon we will be unable to take any step. Look at our feet, they are swollen.

Zona lifts herself up from the ground with the assistance of Ede. They continue to walk, run and rest.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 10

EXT. OUTSIDE NOSA’S HOUSE. DAY

Zona’s parents and some policemen are in front of Nosa’s house. The Policemen knock frantically on Nosa’s door. Eventually, IYAMU, a man in his late twenties with many cuts on his forehead and blood shot eyes opens the door. Iyamu who appears drunk, is holding a bottle of beer and is flanked on both sides by two girls. As soon as he sees the policemen, he attempts to close the door on them, but policemen force their way into the house, followed by Zona’s parents.

POLICEMAN 1
Raise your hands, put them behind your head.

Turns around with his hands still on his head

IYAMU
For what? What have I done?
POLICEMAN 1
Keep your mouth shut. Anything you say now may be used against you in the law court.

IYAMU
What is going on here? Can someone explain to me? Why would you break into my home without any prior notice?

POLICEMAN 2
Move it, move it.

IYAMU
To where? What is my offence. What have I done?

POLICEMAN 2 Where is Zona.

IYAMU
I don’t know. Zona is Nosa’s friend. She is not my friend. Please go and find out from Nosa.

Mina opens her mouth, covers it with her hand.

POLICEMAN 2 Where is Nosa?

IYAMU
I don’t know. He travelled last week.

POLICEMAN 1 To where?

IYAMU
I don’t know.

POLICEMAN 1 He is your friend so you should know his movement and where about. Move it.

Iyamu holds onto the door as the policeman tries to push him.

IYAMU
I am going nowhere.
POLICEMAN 1

Move it, move it.

The Policeman holds him by his pants and pulls him towards the door. They then handcuff him. The other policemen move into the house to search it and reappear bringing out items like laptops, phones, papers etc. They also hand cuff the girls and direct them to the police van. Zona’s parents drive off in their personal car.

CUT TO:

ACT 2 SCENE 11

INT. BABY FACTORY. EVENING

Yuwa and Ivie are sitting with GHOSA, a man in his late forties, short and stocky, constantly wiping his face with his left hand, he sits opposite Yuwa and Ivie holding a few days old baby with his right hand, at the Baby Factory

IVIE
Ghosa the Cockerel is too expensive for 3.5. I would rather pay 2.5.

GHOSA
In that case we will look for a hen for you. The least price we sell Cockerel is 3M. He weighed 8 pounds at birth.

Yuwa taps Ivie on the shoulder.

YUWA
Ivie lets go, I don’t feel comfortable here. I still do not think I should be involved in this. Thanks, Ghosa.

As Yuwa rises to leave, gun shots are heard outside, the policemen burst into the baby factory, they point their gun at Ghosa, who immediately covers himself with the baby, bringing out his gun. In a swift maneuver, the policemen overtake Ghosa and the other men in the Baby Factory. They hand cuff them. They collect the baby from him.

POLICE 2
Where is Zona? Where is Nosa?
RUNA
Zona escaped with Ede yesterday.

POLICEMAN 1 points his gun at Ghosa. The girls are screaming and running to the policemen, hiding behind them. Some of the policemen gather the girls and take them to a waiting van outside.

POLICE 2 Where is Nosa?

GHOSA
He went in search of Zona.

POLICE 2
Clear up this place and let’s leave immediately.
Move, move, move I say.

As they exit, they hear a sound coming from behind the door, and it attracts their attention. They search and find Yuwa and Ivie hiding behind the door. They hand cuff them.

POLICEMAN 1
So, you are the clients that keep this industry alive. Good. You have some questions to answer at the station.

Yuwa is shaking with fear, Ivie is unperturbed, keeping a straight face.

IVIE
Very well, I prefer that.

YUWA
Ehnn Officer, please we are innocent.

POLICEMAN 2
Of what?

YUWA
Officer, Officer...

POLICEMAN 2
Ma’ma, your explanation is not necessary at this point
YUWA
But, but, officer...

The policemen ignore her, motions them to go out. As they do so, he pushes them into the van.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLICE STATION DAY

The DPO’s office (Divisional Police Officer). There are files stacked in file trays. Yuwa and Ivie are brought before the DPO by a younger officer. They look worn out and haggard. Yuwa looks very frighten. She stares around her environment trying to imagine what she has put herself into. Ivie is as calm and confident as can be, she shows no sign of remorse. The DPO is not surprised to see Ivie. This baffles Yuwa.

DPO
Madam Soka Republic, not again?

Yuwa turns to look at Ivie. She raises a brow in curious question.

YUWA
Madam Soka ke? When did you become Madam Soka Republic?

IVIE
That is my business name.

DPO
Business indeed.

Yuwa is confused. A sharp frown quickly creases her brow as she stares at Ivie in utter awe and amazement. DPO lifts a big file.

DPO (CONT’D)
Madam it seems you don’t know this woman very well. This huge file is all on her cases.

Yuwa mutely shakes her head and puts her hand to cover her opened mouth.

DPO (CONT’D)
Madam Soka!

IVIE
Officer, that is my name. Any problem?

DPO
Yes, there is a big problem. Your game is up. Our investigation confirms that you are the owner of the Baby factory where you were arrested

IVIE
So what?

Yuwa jumps up from her seat. She gapes at Ivie in stunned disbelief and finally arched a delicate brow as she continues...

YUWA
Iyemwen! So what? Ivie what am I hearing? That you are what? I can't believe my ears, you a criminal? Owner of that Baby Factory?
No wonder.

Yuwa gasps as she whirls about, and she stares at Ivie awestruck, unable to believe how pitiable her luck has been.

DPO
Madam you claim she is your bosom friend. That is why we refused you bail since yesterday. Our assumption is that birds of the same feather flock together.

YUWA
Yes, officer, we were very close friends in high school, but we lost touch since then. When my husband drove me out of the house because I have no child, she ran to my aid and took me in.

DPO
She saw a prospective client in you. Madam Soka has no sympathy for any one, all she sees in people is money. Everything is monetized in her opinion. This woman?
Pointing at Ivie

DPO (CONT’D)
She can sell her child for money. Ask her what happened to her late husband, what killed him. Madam Soka, we have uncovered the facts.

Places his hand on the file

IVIE

I look forward to knowing your facts.

DPO (CONT’D)

You can’t escape this anymore. Your time is up.

IVIE

Really? We shall see.

Ivie cast a jaundiced glare in the DPO’s direction, displaying disgust for his unsolicited information, and lifting her nose in the air, stares stonily into the distance. A smile lifts the corners of Yuwa’s mouth, she inclines her head to acknowledge the DPO’s revelations. She turns around to look at Ivie and let out an offended cry. A younger officer enters and pulls the DPO aside to discuss with him in low tone.

YUWA

Why Ivie, why did you get me involved in all this. Don’t I have enough problems already?

IVIE

I am sorry, but I only wanted to help you.

YUWA

Is this what you call help? See where your help has landed us.

IVIE

Please, please enough of all that. Don’t compound my problems.

Yuwa raises a sharply questioning brow.
YUWA
O, do you have a problem? I though you said you are on top of the situation.

The DPO sits down shakes his head and looks at Ivie. Points at Yuwa.

DPO
Madam Soka, is this woman in any way connected to your business?

IVIE
Not at all.

DPO addresses the junior officer who is waiting, as he points to Ivie.

DPO
In that case you will return to the cell alone. Call in Prof to come and bail his sister.

The officer leaves the room and returns with Idah. He adds another chair. Idah settles in a chair that the officer pulls out for him, the chair is across from Ivie. Propping his elbow on the wooden arm he musefully, folds his fingers together. He observes Ivie’s haughty but guided manner for a long moment.

IDAH
Yuwa, don’t tell me, that you were arrested in the company of Ivie or is it Soka you call her?

YUWA
Do you know her?

IDAH
Why wont I know her? She was Afe’s wife.

YUWA
Oh my God, tell me it’s a lie. What? It’s a small world.

Looks at her, and sighs shaking her head slowly.
YUWA (CONT’D)
There is no hiding place for the wicked. Ivie what changed you. You were such a wonderful girl when we were growing up.

Ivie, looks at her and tears roll down her eyes. She bites her lips and shakes her head slowly.

DPO
Officer take her back to the cell.

The officer handcuffs Ivie and they leave the room. DPO pushes an opened file in front of Idah and points to a place for him to sign, he signs and they shake hands after that.

DPO (CONT’D)
Madam Yuwa next time be careful of the company you keep. Not all that glitter is gold. Listening to your story yesterday tore my heart apart. My dear wife had a similar problem but we adopted children and today we are happy. Our twins are in the University today.

IDAH
You mean it? Our people see infertility as a misfortune, a crime.

DPO
Infertility is not a crime. Women should be treated with dignity and respect whether they have children or not.

IDAH
My brother, our society scripts the barren woman as primarily responsible for her childlessness. This tradition must change.

Hits his hand on the arm of the chair.

DPO
It has to change. Today it’s my wife, tomorrow it could be my daughter, so what do we do? I will speak to Robosa, we are members of the same club.
No wonder he has been looking so haggard and frustrated.

IDAH
Once again thanks officer. We will wait for the best.

They shake hands again.

DPO
Thanks, Prof. My men are on top of the other situation. Any moment from now we will find your daughter. Her case has opened up a can of worms. Its people like madam Soka who are responsible for all these. When there is demand, the supply will multiply. Their end has come. Give us few days, and we will round them up. Regards to your wife Prof.

Idah and Yuwa leaves. The officer enters and points to a page in an open file.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2 SCENE 12

EXT. FOREST. AFTERNOON

Nosa is running in the forest pursuing Zona and Ede. He stops occasionally, putting his palm behind his ear trying to listen to any sound or noise that may be associated with Zona and Ede. He parts the branches and shrubs with his hands to see if anyone is hiding behind them. He places his palms at both sides of his mouth to megaphone the call for Zona and Ede.

NOSA
Zonnaaaaaaaaa, Edeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!!
Zona is virtually dragging herself, both her hands are placed on her lower back. Occasionally, she stops and screams, breathes through the mouth and bends down trying to control her pain.

**ZONA**

Hey, hey, my back oooo. Hey rub my back.

**EDE**

Breathe in and out. Let’s look for a good place. This may be labor. Take it easy. You remember how the girls at the Baby factory conduct themselves.

Ede rubs her back gently and leads her gently and cautiously through a path to an open space, she brings out a wrapper from her bag and spreads it on the ground. As Zona begins to scream Ede is confused. She runs around aimlessly.

**ZONA**

Ede, please come ooo. Come, come ooooo, rub my back.

Ede moves closer to her.

**ZONA (CONT’D)**

I want to use the rest room.

**EDE**

Restroom ke? It’s the baby. Lie down the baby is coming. Oh my God, see the head of the baby. Push, Push

She divides her attention between rubbing her back and looking out for the arrival of the baby’s.

**EDE (CONT’D) Push,**

pusssssssshhhhhh.

The baby comes out with a sharp scream. Ede carries the baby, wraps him up and cleans Zona. She places the baby on Zona’s chest.

**ZONA**

Thanks Ede. Please I want water.

Ede passes the water to her, Zona gulps it down.
ZONA (CONT’D)
I want more please.

EDE
Where can one get water from in this bush?

ZONA
Remember we saw a river not too far away from here. Please, Ede I am very thirsty.

EDE
Are you sure you’ll be okay if I leave you here alone?

ZONA
Ede go I will be fine. Put the bag close by so that I can collect the blade and thread to tie and cut the cord.

Ede passes her the bag and leaves carrying the water bottles and the birth linen.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST. DAY

Nosa is still searching frantically for Zona and Ede, suddenly, the cry of a baby is heard close by. This draw, his attention. He strains his ears as he moves following the direction of the baby’s cry. All of a sudden he stops as he bumps onto Zona and the baby.

NOSA
Zona, so this is where you are. You have made it easy for me.

Zona who was trying to breast feed the baby holds the baby close to her chest. Nosa forcefully snatches the baby from her. Zona attempts to struggle with him but she is too weak to. As she struggles to stand up and run after Nosa, she slumps to the ground. Nosa removes her wrapper and wraps the baby up and smiles triumphantly. He runs off carrying the baby on his shoulder.

Again, Zona staggers to her feet in daze and stares at Nosa in horror as he leaves with the baby.

CUT TO:
EXT. FOREST DAY

Ede arrives to meet Zona unconscious on the ground.

EDE
Zona wake up. Wake up Zona.

She shakes her vigorously in an attempt to revive her. She sprinkles water on her face and she opens her eyes slowly as she regains consciousness gradually.

ZONA
My baby, my baby!

Pointing to the direction that Nosa took. Ede tries to pacify her.

EDE
What happened Zona? Where is your baby?

Zona is crying

ZONA
Nosa took my baby. Nosa wants to sell my baby. Ede help me get my baby from Nosa.

Ede continues to pacify her as she becomes hysterical.

EDE
Calm down Zona. Thank God, he did not capture you. So long as we are free, we can reach out to the world and report them. Lets go.

Ede supports Zona as they go along gently, she allows her to rest occasionally.

ZONA
Ede, my baby, my baby, where is my baby? Don’t allow Nosa sell my baby.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST DAY
Zona is resting on Ede’s shoulder, they move gradually, Ede occasionally sits on the ground. As they sit down to eat some fruits that Ede brings out of her bag, some Fulani armed bandits surround them and encroach on them. They try to retreat, but it is too late. They motion for them to stand up. They are trembling and cringing with fear and shaking visibly.

ZONA
Oh, not again. Ede, who are these?

EDE
Fulani armed bandits. They are merciless.

ZONA
They look so. Ede, we are in trouble.

EDE
Really big trouble. Kidnapped a second time.

The armed Fulani men tie their hands and drag them along pointing the guns at them. Ede’s bag falls to the ground, as she struggles to retrieve it, the Fulani bandit beat her with the gun. She is forced to follow them.

FADE OUT.

ACT 3 SCENE 1

INT. YUWA/ROBOSA’S LIVING ROOM DAY

Sede, Iro and Robosa are at the table eating. Sede picks up her empty plate and some other plates to take to the kitchen.

IRO
Omosede, you have eaten very little, there is more in the kitchen, who is going to finish the remaining?

SEDE
Mama, I must rush to my son’s school, I have appointment with his teacher.

IRO
You can ask your husband to go on behalf of you. I have not seen my grandchildren for nearly one year now.

SEDE
Yes Iye, I told you that until you bring Yuwa back, my children will not visit you in this house.

IRO
Really, so I have offended you by trying to safeguard your lineage?

SEDE
How well have you done that since Yuwa left? You have brought in two other women, right? Has the story changed?

IRO
Hnnnnn, Yuwa has done juju to make it impossible for my son to impregnate any other women.

Robosa who was on his way to the room suddenly turns around and faces his mother.

ROBOSA
Iye, no one has done any juju. For your information, I never slept with any of those women. Mama, I love my wife, I don’t care what your tradition say, its either Yuwa or no other woman, period.

Sede jumps in excitement, lifting up her hands in the air. She embraces her brother, quickly opens her bag, brings out her phone and dials her husband.

SEDE
Hello, hello, yes, Honey, can you go to Junior’s school for the meeting with his teacher?

HUSBAND (V.O.) Hope you are fine, what’s the problem?

SEDE
I am fine. I will explain when I get home. Bye.

Mama tries to intercept the phone but Sede put forward her hand as if to stop her. At this point Iro sits down and drops her head into her cupped hand. Tossing her head and laughing at her, Sede feigns a look of sympathy. She moves to her brother and holds his hand high up.

SEDE (CONT’D)
You have won the battle, that is the right way to go brother. Tradition will take us nowhere. At the end of the day you are on your own.

ROBOSA
Mama don’t get me wrong; I appreciate your concern.

(MORE)

ROBOSA (CONT’D)
These seven months have given me time to meditate on a lot of things, and I have come to realize that life is what you make of it

IRO
Are you saying that children are not the centre of our lives, what is marriage without children? There is no joy without children.

ROBOSA
Mama, that too I have come to realize that as a couple, you determine what gives you joy. Children or companionship?

Incensed by Robosa’s words, Iro starts to cry.

IRO
Hey, hey, someone help me oooooo. They have turned my son’s head upside down. My enemies have done this wickedness. Hey hey, I must go home and tell my people.

Iro leans her head back to look at her son, settling her gaze on his eyes.

IRO (CONT’D)
If your father where alive, would you have done this to us?

Robosa moves to console Iro, his countenance hold warmth, he sighs in sympathy. Slowly, he begins to speak.

**ROBOSA**

Mama don’t get me wrong. I didn’t say I hate children; I love them with all my heart. But I love my wife more.

Sede is standing by, folding both her hands, looks at her brother with so much admiration. She addresses both her mother and Robosa.

**SEDE**

Iye, there are various ways to become parents these days. They can adopt children, get assisted to conceive or use a surrogate. So you see, having children is so easy these days.

Iro pulls out her handkerchief from her bag to wipe the welling tears in her eyes. She twists both her hands in between her tights, and taps her legs on the ground. Taking firm hold on her emotions, she stiffens her spine and hardens her heart, and responds with a spiteful smile. She then looks up and speaks with a stern voice of warning...

**IRO**

No child of mine will bring a stranger into my home.

**SEDE**

You are right Mama, no one will do that in your home. Fortunately, this is not your home.

**IRO**

Why waste all this passion, time and energy on a woman, who is not a woman? It is high time you realized that Yuwa is not a woman.

Sede puts her hand to her mouth in shock. Her jaws goes slack, and they gawk at her mother as if she loathes to believe what she has just announced.

**SEDE**

I think I have heard enough for one day.
Robosa dashes in and out of his room. He returns with the key to his car.

**ROBOSA**

Iye, it is time I went to look for my wife. I will not return home until I find her. Make yourself comfortable. Sede, I’ll talk to you later. Bye.

**SEDE**

Bye my brother. I think I should be on my way too.

Robosa, bangs the door as he lives the house. With a flippant shrug, Sede steps to the door where she stops momentarily.

**SEDE (CONT’D)**

Bye, Iye. Call me if you need anything.

FADE OUT.

**ACT 3 SCENE 2**

**EXT. FOREST DAY**

About 10 police men are searching everywhere in the forest for Zona, Ede and Nosa. With their hand on the trigger of their guns, they dash around peeping into every nook and corner of the forest. One of the policemen steps on a bag. He stops to pick up the bag.

**POLICEMAN 1**

See what I’ve got.

They all stop, he examines the bag and empties the content, and inspects them carefully.

**POLICEMAN 1 (CONT’D)**

This is obviously Zona’s bag. They must be close by.

**POLICEMAN 2**
In that case put your ears to the ground. They are not too far from here. They must have been captured.

They continue searching, this time around the area where they found the bag. Suddenly, they hear a suspicious noise and they slow down their pace, trying to access the situation.

POLICEMAN 1
They are Fulani armed bandits. I can pick some Fulani words from what I hear.

POLICEMAN 2
Very well then. They probably have captured Zona.

POLICEMAN 1
In that case we must handle this with care.

POLICEMAN 2
Men get set, shoot into the air.

They open fire, suddenly there is exchange of gun shots as the policemen advance towards the bandits. Some take to their heels, and some policemen pursue them shooting at them. Some fall down dead. In a swift maneuver, the policemen cease the Fulani bandits who are using Zona and Ede as human shields. Zona collapses to the ground, Ede is bleeding from her leg, she is wounded.

POLICEMAN 2 (CONT’D) Take them out of here. Two of you rush them to the waiting ambulance.

As they carry Zona and Ede, Zona opens her eyes, and she notices Ede bleeding, she struggles to get up and reach out to touch her. The policemen help them out

ZONA
Ede, are you okay?

POLICEMAN 2
The rest of you halele, move it. Nosa and the baby.

They proceed in their search for Nosa, running in the forest and occasionally they shoot into the air. As they shoot another shot, suddenly they hear a baby screaming. Policeman 2 cock his left ear, bending his head to listen to the sound.
POLICEMAN 2 (CONT’D)

I hear a baby screaming, move, advance, fast, fast.

They follow the direction of the screaming, and suddenly, Nosa jumps out of the bush and drops the baby on the ground and takes to his heels.

POLICEMAN 2 (CONT’D)

Pick up the baby, Sergeant.

A female policewoman rescues the baby while others pursue Nosa, shooting at him. As he runs, he turns around to also shoot at the policemen. Nosa stumbles to a halt and braces his hand on his knees as he fights to control his own labored breathing, he tries to move, a bullet hits his chest and he drops dead.

ACT 3 SCENE  3

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM DAY

Zona and Ede are on their beds in the hospital. Ede’s leg is bandaged. Zona is being transfused with (normal saline or dextrose) drip. Yuwa enters, embraces Zona, Mina enters too carrying a baby. She embraces Zona after balancing the baby on her back with a wrapper. Idah, Robosa and Iro enter too. Idah is staring at Zona, he steps towards her, holding his hands out wide, he embraces Zona. Robosa runs to embrace Yuwa.

ROBOSA

My love for you will never be constraint by tradition.

He pulls Yuwa to himself and gives her a kiss.

Idah sits on a seat by Zona’s bed.

IDAH

My princess, my precious jewel. I miss you.
Thank God for the great deliverance.

ROBOSA
Zona, I am sorry for how I treated you the last time you were in my house. I have realized my mistakes; I deeply regrets my actions.

MINA
Zona, we love you.

Iro moves close to Yuwa and Zona, and she circles her hand around the two of them.

IRO
Please forgive me. I was blinded by tradition. Now I know better.

Zona is crying. She signals for Robosa and Yuwa to move closer. She carries the baby from Mina and hand him over to Yuwa and Robosa.

ZONA
Aunty Yuwa, this is your baby. This is my gift to you, to have and to keep. No more tears Aunty live a fulfilled life from now on.

Iro carries the baby from Yuwa and immediately secures the baby on her back using Mina’s wrapper. She starts singing and dancing around the room.

EDE
Aunty here is another baby for you.

Ede points to her tummy as she starts wailing as a result of labor pain. She bites her lips trying to control the pain. Zona attempts to get down from the bed to help Ede, she is restrained. Mina and Yuwa dash to Ede’s bedside. Mina picks up the phone and dials a number.

MINA
Doctor, doctor, your attention is needed here. There is an emergency. Ede is in labor.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.
GLOSSARY

Abi: Is that not so?

Ankara: Western African print fabric

Boubou: West African Dress

Buba & Iro: Nigerian wrapper and Top. It is tied with the blouse tucked inside.

Ehnn: It is so

Gele: Big Nigerian head wrap, tied stylishly.

Halale: Command for an accused person to fall in line (move)

Hey, hey: Expression of anxiety

Iye: Mother

Ke: Ke is an expression of doubt or questioning a previous statement.

Mummy say make we nor tay ooo: Mummy said we should not stay long.
Ode: Fool

Oooo: Nigerian English way of emphasis

Sit down there, express go pass you; Don’t allow yourself to be left behind: You have been left behind

Waka Waka: A perambulator

We don reach oo. Make I wait or make I park: We have arrived at our destination. Do I park the car or wait here?

Whoo whoo: A way of shaming someone

Who dey do dubious tin? Are my dubious person? Who is a dubious person?

Ya total!: Go and sit down!

Yuwa, you fall my hand o, so man drive you and you run commot?: Yuwa I am disappointed in you, why do you have to leave your home simply because a man ask you to?
4.4 Glossary

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5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Since the first publicly reported case of a baby factory as contained in a UNESCO report in 2006, the clandestine baby factory enterprise in Nigeria has continued to thrive. Baby factory is a form of human trafficking that constitutes serious human rights concern considering the victimization of both women and children who are molested exploited. It is the ultimate for of commodification and colonization of the female body. It is in the light of this unpleasant reality that I set out to examine this phenomenon to create more public awareness as a way of influencing its curtailment. The screen play that has been written for this project will in future be used as an advocacy resource by various advocacy groups, with the intention of bringing about the desired change in the demand chain of this business. It is hoped that this project will initiate a critical turn around in the illegal transaction and trafficking of infant babies so that the business of baby factory in Nigeria will be completely eradicated there will be a cultural transformation in favor of women.

There is need for policies that will respect women’s reproductive choices and reproductive justice that recognizes individual’s reproductive freedom. Society should become more aware and respond to the trauma women go through when their gender performance fails to meet up the cultural standard of femininity, specifically when she fails to bear children for her husband.
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