

The Representation of Women's Experiences in Eastern Nigeria as Portrayed

in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Trilogy

by

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## ABSTRACT

Women characters' agency and active roles in transforming traditional African societies have always been misrepresented in literary texts. This study investigated how women characters are presented in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones* (1996), *House of Symbol* (2001) and *Children of the Eagle* (2002). These novels have been selected to show the representation of women characters using her novel to negate certain patriarchal assumptions about women and also project the uncelebrated superior facets of female panache. Using African womanism theoretical underpinning to understand the characters through the eyes of the author, the study found out that Igbo women have always been active rather than passive members of the Igbo society, in comparison to previous literary works that under-represented women characters, it is argued that in pre-colonial times Igbo women were not actively involved in the affairs of the society. Adimora-Ezeigbo has been selected to show the representation of women character using her novel to negate certain patriarchal assumptions about women and also project the uncelebrated superior facets of female panache. The authors feminist discourses in her works seem to have been greatly influenced by the feminist critical outlook in the West of the 1970s which had sought to expose the mechanisms of patriarchy that is the cultural mindset in men and women which perpetuated sexual inequality. Thus, the study discusses the roles played by Adimora-Ezeigbo's female characters in the face of oppressive realities from the pre-colonial to the post-independent era in Nigeria. Recommendations for centering women characters in literary texts and further research on this subject are highlighted at the end of the dissertation.