



Love and Emotional Ties in Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus and Half of a Yellow Sun

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Abstract	Original Research Article
<p>Love and emotional ties are complex experiences which not only underscore human relationships but also define actions and inactions, even in conflict situations. Many Scholars have made various attempts to describe and theorize the dynamics of love and emotional connections and their ideas have set the frame for interdisciplinary engagements of love and emotions in research. Scholars in Psychology, Religion, Political Science and many other fields are beginning to explore the intersection between love and emotions and the unique experiences that characterize their fields. In the field of Literature, it is common to see the engagement of the concept of love and emotions as themes in fictional and non-fictional texts but less common to see them as critical or theoretical approaches. Hence, this study examines the portrayal of love and emotions in Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus, and Half of a Yellow Sun using the tenets of John Lee's Colour Wheel model and Robert Stenberg's triangular theory of love. The analysis reveals that the novelist intentionally illustrates the shades and dynamics of love and emotions as intricate phenomena that can either heal or destroy interactions. This study recommends a more detailed engagement of love and emotions as fundamental experiences which could help in shaping societies especially with the rising waves of chaos in many parts of the world. This study is a contribution to the body of knowledge because it illustrates the application of the conceptual and theoretical constructions of love and emotions in Literature.</p> <p>Keywords: Love, Emotional Ties, Feelings, Family Relationships, Colour Wheel Model of Love, Triangular Theory of Love.</p> <p>Citation: Harun or-Rashid, M. (2025). Reconceptualizing global security: A comprehensive examination of human security and its impact on global development and peacebuilding. <i>ISA Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (ISAJAHSS)</i>, 2(3), 140-146.</p>	

INTRODUCTION

Love is a universal human experience or human emotion that may manifest in various forms and lead to a variety of cognitive affective responses and behaviour. It can be experienced by different groups of humanity (romantic partners, spouses, parents, children, friends, etc.) and even non-human components of the environment. Scientists describe love in various ways including as an emotion and a physiological state (Hatfield and Rapson, 1993). Theorists have identified models of love. One of the first typologies of love developed in the scientific literature was the distinction between passionate love and companionate love (Sprecher and Regan, 2007). Another love category was proposed by the social psychologist Robert Sternberg, in his Triangular Theory of Love. Sternberg (1986) proposed that love is composed of three components: passion, commitment, and intimacy (p. 320).

Apart from love, emotion is another factor that is implicated in human relationships. Arnold (1960) raised pertinent questions that border on the characteristics of emotions: How do emotions work? How are emotions felt and expressed? According to him, emotion influences everything we do from the way we behave and think, to the way we communicate and make decisions. People are capable of a vast range of emotions, ranging from satisfaction in daily taste to the sadness of losing valuable things and the death of loved ones (pp. 74-6). Emotional support increases self-esteem and innovative abilities, allowing individuals to acquire skills through learning by observation and imitation. Consequently, emotional ties can be described as strands of subjective feelings that comes together to create a bond between two people or arouse strong feelings like anger, sorrow, joy, love or any of plethora of emotions that humans experience.

Love and emotional ties have, for a long time, constituted an active field of research and elicited a wide range of engagement in literary scholarship. This may be because human beings share physical, emotional and psychological attachments and connections with one another and with their natural environment. As far back as Aristotle, Shakespeare and other pioneer scholars in Western drama, prose and poetry, the subject of love has featured old prejudices concerning heroism, dating, marriage, taste, chastity and originality. From Classical to Romantic Literature and beyond, love between humans and human-nature relations have been subject matters in Western literatures. Even in the context of indigenous African history and culture, love has occupied a pivotal position in the affairs of humans within societies. There were unwritten communal ethos that defined the intersections of love and emotions in pre-colonial Africa. One of such ethos, according to Lawal and Adeniyi (2021) is the collective survival and extended family pattern of living which contrasted sharply with the overtly individualistic Western models (p. 3). Africans believe that the lives of individuals acquire true meaning and essence only when they fit into the patterns and structures of their immediate communities.

Today, new and dynamic perspectives of love and emotions have evolved in Africa and other post-colonies and writers in different climes have trailed the developments through their literary creativity. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is one writer who has consistently featured love and emotional ties as a motif in her fictional prose works – short stories and novels. In *The Thing Around Your Neck*, many of the stories border on love, emotions and the twists and turns in family and romantic relationships. The same trope features in *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americana*. Adichie's intentionality with the motif of love and emotional ties is most evident in her ability to create intersections between such feelings and serious phenomena such as conflict and the intrigues of migration experiences as in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americana* respectively.

Scholars have engaged Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* and from various perspectives ranging from thematic, psychoanalytic to stylistic but not many critics have examined the novelist's symbolic portrayal of love and emotional ties even in the conflict spectrum as an attempt to promote true love as a tool for attaining an egalitarian society. Adichie in these novels presents characters who share complex feelings that influence their actions and inactions but scholars are yet to fully analyse the significance of the novelist's depiction of love as a thread that runs through her novels. The present study attempts to fill this gap. The focus on the selected novels is premised on the fact that they yield easily to the tenets of the theories of love selected for this paper since the novelist is intentional about depicting important phenomena that wield great influence on humans and non-humans in the environment.

There are many ways love can be appropriated in literary criticism and general scholarship. It is possible to explore how love engenders conflict and power dynamics in postcolonial contexts. Nietzsche's Model of Love, Stenberg's Triangular

Theory of Love and the Lee's Colour Wheel Theory of Love, among other critical perspectives, can provide useful tenets for examining how fictional writers use characters, setting and language to analyse the intersections between love, conflict, race, power, identity and cultures in Literature. This study adopts the ideas of Lee and Stenberg in the examination of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is set in postcolonial Nigeria, a country beset by political instability and economic difficulties. The novelist depicts the dynamics of family interaction through Kambili Achike, a fifteen-year-old from a wealthy family in Enugu State who is dominated by her devout Catholic father named Eugene. The dissolution of Kambili's family as a result of her father's extreme disciplinary measures is reflective of what obtains in many African families, especially where there are inclinations to patriarchal institutions. Kambili's family shows the excesses that are attached to love and emotional ties in the postcolonial African context. The novel begins with its climax, a violent domestic scene resulting from many months of frustration and change. Some of the depictions in the novel illustrate how actions and inactions which are influenced by love and emotional connections alter relationships and set the frame for realisations that underscore the author's artistic visions in terms of fostering an egalitarian society where unity and justice can be entrenched. Auntie Ifeoma shows strength through adversity, compassion and a sense of joy which illustrate the importance of education, tradition, unconditional love and acceptance between Kambili, Jaja, Auntie Ifeoma and her children. Adichie strategically portrays shades of love so that readers will have a fuller understanding of its pleasures, extremes, dangers and sacrifices.

Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* tells the story of the Nigerian Civil War and focuses on the experiences of the ordinary individuals during the war. In making a heart-wrenching account of the war which took place between 1967 and 1970, Adichie tells the story of love, loyalty, betrayal, resilience and hope in the conflict spectrum. The story of the novel trails the postcolonial experience of Nigeria and represents the political turmoil of 1966 which caused the massacre of people of the Igbo tribe in South East Nigeria, hence their secession bid and subsequent declaration of the Republic of Biafra. The Federal Government of Nigeria matched the action of secession with what it termed 'police action' but turned out to be a full scale military action intended to force the seceding side into submission. The Federal government used extreme violence and stern measures that resulted to the loss/death of many Igbos, including the novelist's two grandfathers. This novel is indeed a remarkable novel about moral responsibility, ethnic allegiances, class and race and the ways in which love can complicate them all. Adichie's creative infusion of different shades of love in her war narrative makes it one of the best historical fiction pieces of literature which draws upon the emotions of its readers to make them understand the story at a more empathetic level through the eyes of its characters. Adichie's love-in-a-war-

context experiment is similar to Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's approach in *Roses and Bullets*.

The foregoing has shown that love and emotional ties are fundamental concepts which define integral aspects of human existence and human interactions with the natural and the material worlds and have featured in both Western and African literatures. But the bulk of engagements of these concepts have been done at peripheral levels where scholars merely analysed them as themes in fictional and non-fictional works. Consequently, the present study is set to explore love and emotional ties from a more holistic perspective, specifically in terms of functionality in social and broader contexts, using Lee and Stenberg's models of love and drawing ascriptions that offer a more robust description of these concepts and their connections to power and conflict dynamics. The focus of this paper is to examine the novelist's depiction of love and emotional ties in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* to specifically identify the types of love relationships portrayed through the characters as well as show how love and emotional ties influence the experiences of characters in the selected novels.

Models and Theories of Love

Psychologist John Lee, in his 1973 book, *The Colours of Love*, compares styles of love to the Colour Wheel. Lee suggests that there are six styles of love namely *eros*, *ludos*, *storge*, *mania*, *pragma* and *agape*. The terms are of Greek origin. *Eros* means "passionate" or "erotic". Lee suggested that this type of love involves both physical and emotional passion. The second term, *ludos*, means "game." According to Lee, this form of love is conceived as playful and fun, but not necessarily serious. Those who exhibit this form of love are not ready for commitment and are wary of too much intimacy. Then the third style, *storge*, refers to "natural affection." This form of love is often represented by familial love among parents and children, siblings, and extended family members. This type of love can also develop out of friendship where people who share interests and commitments gradually develop affection for one another. *Mania* is a form of love that is inclined towards obsession, *pragma* is a practical kind of love which benefits the involved parties and *agape* is the term that describes selfless love where the person who loves is more interested in making sacrifices than in receiving (p. 175).

Scholars across an array of disciplines have tried to define the meaning and nature of love; some social psychologists have explained the concept of love using psychometric techniques. Robert Sternberg's triangular theory of love is one that stands out in this mould. (Sternberg, 1986). The triangular theory of love describes types of love based on three different scales: *Intimacy*, *passion* and *commitment*. According to Stenberg, it refers to such intimacy as feelings or closeness, connectedness and boldness in loving relationships (p. 320). The Theory of Love Triangle, which Stenberg has proposed, opines that the attraction of love depends on the identity or similarity of two individuals' unconscious love

stories. He believes that every human being has a person narrative or the love story in the current relationship and that the survival of every couple in romantic relationships depends on the affinity and homogeneity domains. Several studies have used care-giving, scale and compassionate love scale, to describe the role of caring, concern, tenderness, supporting, helping, and understanding the other(s) in love and relationships (Shaver and Fraley, 2000; Sprecher and Regan, 2007).

Over time, scholars have explored other typologies and manifestations of love and emotional bonds. Passionate love and compassionate love have stood out as models that are worthy of critical attention because they are not moored to the dialectics of age, gender and culture (Hatfield and Kim, 2004). Similarly, Clingan (2021) highlights some contemporary perspectives of love which complement and expand on the ideas of Lee and Stenberg. He identifies ten types of love which include: love for parents, love for friends, agape love, love for animals, intimate love, selfish love, unending love for friends, love for close friends, obsessive love towards people, and child love (p. 332). Interestingly, Clingan's categorisation of love aligns with the ideas of both Stenberg and Lee.

Thus, the ensuing analysis of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* is anchored on the tenets of Lee's and Stenberg's ideas discussed in this section. This paper highlights the nature, dynamics and functionalities of love and emotional ties in various experiences of life, including war-time situations.

The Character of Love and Emotional Ties in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

The model of love in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is described with the experiences of Kambili, Aunt Ifeoma and her kids as well as Papa Achike. Adichie's characters manifest forms of love that align with Stenberg's Triangular Theory of Love. Stenberg's model refers to love as the intimacy or feelings\closeness, connectedness and bonding in loving relationships.

One of the relationships portrayed in the novel is between Kambili and her father. Kambili longs for fatherly affection but gets hurt in the web of her father's love. From her experience in her relationship with her father, Kambili realises and learns that there are shades of love and each shade comes with its dynamics. Incidentally, for her, it is the pain she feels in her relationship with her father that becomes a way of knowing that she is loved. Another shade of love is portrayed when Kambili gets to Aunt Ifeoma's house. Kambili and her brother experience familial love and warmth for the first time. Kambili also nurtures her aunt's children and her cousins. With Aunt Ifeoma's encouragement, Kambili and her brother, Jaja, begin to think independently and gain the courage to express their own opinions. This great love shown to Kambili is what initially exposes her to a world in which people are happy, and love is given freely.

The character of love represented between Kambili and her father, and between Kambili and Aunt Ifeoma falls within

Sternberg's description of storge – the familial love between parents and children, siblings and extended family members. In *Purple Hibiscus*, the familial love is between Papa, Mama, Jaja, Kambili and Papa-Nnukwu. Another dimension of Stenberg's theory is portrayed in the relationship between Kambili and Father Amadi. She starts up a conversation with him and opens up more. As times goes, she falls in love with the young priest, Father Amadi, which made her ultimately retain her catholic faith, though a more liberal one when compared with that of Father Amadi and her aunt, Aunt Ifeoma. In Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Aunt Ifeoma is the character that shows her niece and her nephew what a healthy relationship should be. She also impacts her family in many positive ways (p. 83). The nature of love she offers Kambili and her brother is physical, emotional and spiritual. It also includes genuine care, listening ears and other forms of fondness that the children never experienced.

Emotional ties can be described as the bundle of subjective feelings that come together to create bonds among people. In Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* Kambili tries to find her own voice in an oppressive society and home; in many occasions in the novel, the red and purple hibiscus play an important role in the eyes of Kambili and Jaja, her brother. Before things started to fall apart, the hibiscuses were still a vibrant red colour which indicates that they have not fully bloomed and that freedom has not yet settled in the family (p. 3). The only way Kambili's father, Eugene Achike, can keep his wife and children in control is through violence. This makes the children see the purple hibiscus only when they visit Aunt Ifeoma, their father's sister in Nsukka. Kambili stays with her brother, Jaja, in Nsukka with their aunt and feels the fresh air of freedom. Jaja sees purple hibiscus as a hope that something new can exist such as new life without their father's rules. To commemorate his renewed faith, Jaja takes some of the flowers with him back home and plants them in the garden, in hope that freedom will soon come through. Life in Nsukka makes Kambili's attitude towards nature change as she attains maturity. The love Kambili gets from Aunt Ifeoma and Father Amadi brings out the best in her and makes her grow in strength and character. Kambili develops an unusual love for her environment – a kind of emotional bond that offers her some sort of closure in the face of her travails.

Using the symbols of red and purple hibiscuses, Adichie symbolises the shades of love in *Purple Hibiscus*. The changes that Kambili goes through in the novel are reflected in the historical and cultural context of post-colonial Nigeria. Kambili's transformation is affected by the political situation in the country. To Dube (2018), Papa Eugene's patriarchal violence depends on his striving to be like the colonizer and is connected to mimicry (p. 327). Adichie captures the complexity of the relationship between father and daughter, which can be described as patronage. Kambili's father keeps his family under a strict regime, and uses both physical and psychological abuse to maintain, authority over his family. When Kambili does not take first place in her class, she is humiliated by Papa Eugene: "Kambili," Papa said, breathing deeply, "you didn't put in your best this term. You came second because you chose to." His

eyes were sad, deep and sad. I wanted to touch his face to run my hand over his rubbery cheeks. There were stories in his eyes that I would never know (pp. 41 - 2). Kambili wants Papa Eugene's approval to avoid punishment, but mostly to win his love and attention. Even though Kambili is abused by Papa Eugene, she loves him and this causes an inner conflict in her self-empowerment. Her affection for her father makes it difficult for her to break free from his patriarchy. Kambili is thrilled by the few moments of love with her father when they have tea together:

Have a love sip, he would say, and Jaja would go first. Then I would hold the cup with both hands and raise it to my lips. One sip, the tea was always too hot, always burned my tongue, and its lunch was something peppery, my raw tongue suffered. But it didn't matter, because I knew that when the tea burned my tongue, it burned Papa's love into me but Papa didn't say, have a love sip watched him raise the cup to his lips. (p. 8)

This 'Love Sip' is a routine that Papa Eugene omits when he begins to have problems with Jaja. Kambili often shows moments of affection for her father, she wants to hug him, and she wants him to be proud of her. Kambili is afraid of her father and wants to grow up confident. She wants Papa Eugene to be proud of her, and she also believes that if she does everything he desires, he will be less evil to her.

The affection that Kambili feels for her father is understandable, as Nutsukpo (2017) claims, children normally look up to their parents, especially their fathers. Nutsukpo goes on to suggest that Papa Eugene's behaviour is like a betrayal of his children's love and trust (pp. 124-5). Papa Eugene not only continues to hurt them and almost endangers their lives in a bid to bring out the best in them.

Kambili is the one who fears Papa Eugene's punishments the most. This means that the thought of imminent punishment keeps Kambili from misbehaving and 'sinning.' Papa Eugene explains this to his daughter and further foregrounds the nature of love he holds for her (p. 196). Papa Eugene is convinced that Kambili understands why he punishes her and that, thanks to his punishments, she will never 'sin' again. Punishment, for Papa Eugene, is the only way to prevent children from committing sin. The punishments that Papa Eugene inflicts on Kambili and Jaja cause fear, isolation, and silence as they try not to anger their father in order to remain safe.

The novel further illustrates how Papa Eugene expresses his love for his children through extremities that align with his patriarchal dispositions and lopsided understanding of what love means and how it should be expressed. When Kambili feels sick as a result of her monthly menstrual cycle, Jaja gives her some flakes with milk to drink, breaking the rule of going to mass on an empty stomach, Papa Eugene reacts in a manner that portrays insensitivity to body changes. He gets angry and the narrator describes his reaction as follows:

He unbuckled his belt slowly. It was a heavy belt made of layers of brown leather with a sedate leather-covered buckle. It landed on Jaja first, across his shoulder. Then

mama raised his hands as it landed on her upper arm, which was covered by the puffy sea wine sleeve of her church blouse. I put the bowl down just as the belt landed on my back. As he swung his belt at Mama, Jaja, and me, muttering that the devil would not win. (p. 102)

The words, “the devil will not win” are a clear sign of Papa Eugene’s conviction that his mission is to prevent Kambili from sinning, whatever it costs; for him, it was an act of love. After the punishment, Papa Eugene hugs Kambili and Jaja and asks them if the belt hurt them (p. 102). Papa Eugene often punishes his children and wife and hugs them afterwards or wants to continue as if nothing happened. Papa Eugene is aware that his wife and children may hate him for his extreme acts, so, he shows affection after the punishment. Kambili, accepts Papa Eugene’s psychological and physical violence and believes that he has the right to punish them.

Interestingly, the dynamics of love and family relationships twist slightly as Kambili visits Aunt Ifeoma. She is not used to protesting anything in Papa Eugene’s home and when she enters Aunt Ifeoma’s home, she continues to behave that way. Kambili is silent and does not respond when she is scolded by Amaka. Aunt Ifeoma insists that Kambili fights back when her daughter Amaka teases her for not doing the house work: “Aunt Ifeoma’s eyes hardens as she thunders: ‘O ginidi, Kambili, have you no mouth? Talk back to her’” (p. 170). Aunt Ifeoma’s encouragement causes Kambili to raise her voice and defend herself. Aunt Ifeoma believes that everyone should speak up and tell the truth no matter what. To Kambili, it is something new, something unusual, that somebody asks her to respond to somebody and it takes her some time to do so. Aunt Ifeoma makes her realise the line between love and humiliation.

Kambili, in Father Amadi, finds a person who cares about her, and this changes her life because she is encouraged to be herself and to strive for happiness. Father Amadi asks Jaja about the abuse he and Kambili suffer at the hands of Papa Eugene, and this allows Father Amadi to help Kambili because he can perceive the fear in her heart and understand why she is so quiet and shy (p. 175). Kambili also notices the power and uniqueness of Father Amadi’s voice and notes as follows “His voice had the same effects on my ears as that of mama working pears baby oil into my hair on my scalp. I did not fully comprehend his English-laced Igbo sentences at dinner because my ears followed the sound and not the sense of his speech” (p. 135). Kambili falls in love with Father Amadi, which awakens her sense of sexuality with him, Kambili smiles, laughs, runs, and dreams as he instils confidence and hope in her with his encouragement. Father Amadi assures Kambili, “You can do anything you want, Kambili” (p. 239). Through her encounter with Father Amadi, Kambili learns about a new religion that encompasses Christianity and the Igbo religion, and she also finds herself, which frees her from her silence.

The foregoing has highlighted the types and nature of love, relationships and emotional ties portrayed in Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*. Kambili’s ties with her father differ from the bonds she shares with Father Amadi and her aunty.

Adichie’s Representation of War Relationships in *Half of a Yellow Sun*.

Adichie’s work is a compelling novel about life during the Nigerian civil war which was set in Nigeria. The plot of the story is realised through characterisation and powerful language. The novelist successfully incorporates and promotes Nigerian indigenous languages as well as re-affirms the concept that African languages have a place in our 21st century, English-dominated world. Through the power of language, the novelist achieves a clear delineation of characters that portray the dynamic sets of love relationships and emotional connections that are possible even in conflict situations.

The novel deals with political and historical events but it is also deeply personal, particularly in the love between its characters such as the romantic relationship between Olanna and Odenigbo, Kainene and Richard, Ugwu’s infatuation with Eberechi and the siblings love between Olanna and Kainene. Olanna’s love for Odenigbo brings her into his world of radical politics, and Richard’s love for Kainene causes him to cross racial and political boundaries.

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Love and emotional experiences in Adichie’s *Half of the Yellow Sun* are depicted in the relationships between the characters, especially, Olanna and Odenigbo, Kainene and Richard and Ugwu’s infatuation with Ebere, as well as the siblings love between Olanna and Kainene. Olanna’s love for Odenigbo brings her into his world of radical politics and Richard’s love for Kainene causes him to cross racial and political boundaries. The love between the sisters becomes a sort of symbol for the unity of Nigeria, as they painfully cut off the tie but are eventually re-united. Ugwu’s longing for Nmasinachi and Eberechi are thwarted by the war. The love between Kainene and Richard and the love between the twin sisters seem to be the most enduring of the book.

Kainene portrays various dimensions of love including the agape variant. She decides to put her life at risk by participating in a cross-border trade which involves crossing enemy lines, in order to bring provisions back for those who depend on her. Kainene becomes disgusted by the conditions of the people around her and decides to risk it all. She draws from an innate sense of responsibility (p. 403). This sense of purpose encourages Kainene to risk her life for the wellbeing of others.

As the war ends, Kainene and Olanna had “created their own world that Odenigbo and Mr. Richard could never quite enter” (p. 499). Throughout the course of the novel, conflict allows these two women to reshape their relationships between each other and among other women. The absence of men, physically, if they are at war and mentally, if they remain at home, lead women to seek friendships across class lines in order

to strengthen their chances of survival and find comfort amidst trauma. The friendship between Mrs. Muokelu, a working-class Igbo woman, and Olanna is mutually beneficial because the women share knowledge and goods. Similarly, the relationship that arises between Olanna and Alice is described as a “vulgar and delicious female bond” because the women laugh and share secrets, resulting in a mutually supportive friendship (p. 422). The Igbo women from various classes create a non-hierarchical community from which they all benefit, whether it is from the sharing of goods or the companionship created between two women. While Odenigbo does not recognise the importance of kinship, Olanna’s generosity illustrates her willingness to share her family’s meagre supplies in an effort to regain a sense of their past life and create communal connections. Olanna is able to see past war in order to recognize the importance of friendships and kinship.

Olanna repeatedly acknowledges the “enemy” as human while Odenigbo cannot conceptualise the Northerners as real people. Therefore, by voicing her concerns about others’ wellbeing, Olanna creates discourse about the necessity of stability that can only be achieved through mutual understanding and dialogue, further stressing the need for healthy relationships between men and women during war and crisis.

Adichie, in *Half of a Yellow Sun*, explores different themes that relate to family, love, passion, betrayal, infidelity, forgiveness, broken dreams, identity and the effects of the Biafran war. The effects of the war are shown through the dynamic relationships of the ordinary people roped into full scale war. The major characters range from high ranking political figures, a professor and a British citizen, to a houseboy. The lives of these characters are strongly connected as they undergo experiences of Nigerian-Biafra war, and this is when their individual stories start. Through these characters, their families and their connections, Adichie explores a number of themes related to conflict scenarios.

Adichie presents infidelity and betrayal as experiences that relate to love and emotional ties in conflict situations. Infidelity and betrayal are depicted in the relationships involving Odenigbo (Olanna’s lover), Richard, (Kainene’s lover and a British writer). Odenigbo’s sexual encounter with Amala – the village girl his mother wanted him to marry – hits Olanna so hard that she almost quit her marriage. Olanna chides Odenigbo and fires: “It’s you and not your mother. It happened because you let it happen. You must take responsibility”. In response, Odenigbo pleads: “I am not a philandering man, and you know that this would not have happened if my mother didn’t have a hand.” Then Olanna retorts: “Did your mother pull out your penis and insert it into Amala as well? (p. 356). Clearly, this incident creates a deep rupture in their relationship which can be described within the context of betrayal and infidelity.

In reaction to her hurt and despite the love Olanna has for Odenigbo, Olanna decides to cheat back by engaging her sister’s lover, Richard, in a sexual encounter. The scenario is captured thus:

She kissed his lips. He pulled her forcefully close, and then, just as quickly, he let go and moved his face away. She could hear his rapid breathing. She unbuckled his trousers and moved back to pull them down and laughed because they got stuck at his shoes. She took her dress off. (p. 234)

Throughout Adichie’s novel, infidelity and betrayal are portrayed as factors implicated in love relationships and emotional ties. However, the novel presents love as a force that is strong enough to swim against the tide of infidelity and associated challenges. Kainene and Olanna are able to resolve their differences and relate as siblings, Kainene and Richard are able to come together again and Olanna and Odenigbo eventually find a way to live together again. Thus the novelist portrays love and emotional ties as forces that are stronger than infidelity and betrayals especially in conflict scenarios where there are bigger issues that border on living and surviving.

CONCLUSION

Love and emotional ties underscore various aspects of society, ranging from religion, education and culture to politics at the local and international levels. Although love can be hydra-headed, immeasurable or abstract, yet the nature of love and emotional relations is such that they provide the right ambience to foster peaceful families, and actualise the attainment of egalitarian societies and the values that define them. Many writers have tried to model virtues such as love and action-backed bonds as the panacea to the healing that many postcolonial African societies need but their works have not received the extent of critical attention they deserve. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is one of such writers. Despite the wide engagement her works have enjoyed, only a few scholars have considered her unique depiction of different shades of love and emotional bonds as a trope in her fictional works. Hence, the thrust of this present study which surmises that Adichie’s fictional works pursue the idea of achieving social justice through the re-evaluation of the dynamics of love and emotional ties in human relations during normalcy and during the chaos of the conflict spectrum. Adichie’s popular novels, *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americana* all highlight love and emotional bonds in their different shades. This paper, having engaged Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, recommends the re-evaluation of love and emotional ties in postcolonial societies if Africa’s quest for total justice will be achieved in Nigeria and other post-colonies.

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