



“Men are the Problem; Men are the Answer”: Contradictory Patterns of Representation of Men in Female-Authored Articles in Nigerian Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that men constitute a large portion of Nigerian media coverage, it appears that we know little about how they are represented in Nigerian newspapers especially by female writers/journalists. Most studies concerned with gender portrayal in Nigerian media tend to focus on how women are represented mainly by male writers/journalists (e.g. Odejide 1996, Daniel 2011, Adewoye et al 2014). This paper examines the many complex, subtle and contradictory patterns of linguistic representation of men in female-authored articles in Nigerian newspapers. It does so by employing methods of and insights from critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics tools to analyze 200 female-authored articles on gender and other related issues published in five Nigerian newspapers namely; *The Guardian*, *Vanguard*, *The Punch*, *Daily Trust* and *New Nigerian* from 1999 to 2014, a period that has witnessed an unprecedented surge in the wave of gendered discourses in Nigerian print news media. Using Lawrence Anthony's *AntConc* version 3.4.3w concordance package, collocational profile of the node word MEN (and its singular variant) was extracted and investigated, and results obtained show that Nigerian female authors generally depict men as both the “problem” and the “answer.” This is evidenced by the prevalence of discourses that construct men as oppressors on one hand, and providers and leaders on the other. These contradictory patterns of representation are understood in this paper as examples of “textual heterogeneity” as exemplified by the range of different identities women have constructed for men. Moreover, these patterns of representations can also be seen as both reinforcing and resisting patriarchal social order existing in our society.

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Introduction

Gender representation in the media is a topic that has received a great deal of attention recently. However, most studies concerned with gender portrayal in print news media have focused on the way women (and not men) are represented. As Byerly and Ross (2006) observe, representation of women in the media has increasingly become the focus of inquiries of many language and gender researchers. In this paper, I intend to analyze patterns of collocation and representation of men in female-authored articles in Nigerian newspapers, in order to answer the following questions: (i) how do women linguistically represent men in Nigerian newspapers?; (ii) what type of identities they construct for men?; (iii) are the constructed identities homogenous or heterogeneous?; (iv) which ideology the constructed identities reflect?; and, (v) what do they reveal about the power relations between men and women in Nigerian society?

Frequent patterns of co-occurring lexical items or collocations, Jaworska and Krishnamurthy (2012:406) argue, are important to examine, as they can point to the salient ideologies (or, as Stubbs [2007: 187] prefers, discourse prosody) associated with a particular research phenomenon or, in this case men. As Stubbs (1996:172) notes, “words occur in characteristic collocations, which show the

associations and connotations they have, and therefore the assumptions they embody.” The paper, therefore, aims at examining how the associations and connotations the key word MEN (and its singular variant *man*) acquire on account of the meanings of the lexical items, which tend to occur in their environments (Leech, 1974: 20) implicitly (or explicitly) communicate something about how men are represented by women in Nigerian newspapers.

The paper opens with an introductory remark about the phenomenon it intends to investigate and the research questions it seeks to answer. Following this is a discussion on the theoretical framework adopted and a description of the data and research methodology. Thereafter, the analysis of the data is conducted by identifying collocates of the lemma MEN in the corpus. This is complemented with the qualitative method of critical discourse analysis, with a view to uncovering the ideological stance and/or attitudes of female writers/journalists towards men and male gender in general. Finally, the main findings of the study are outlined.

Theoretical and methodological framework

Studying patterns of collocation and representation of men in female-authored newspaper articles within a critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) framework can be productive, since CDA is primarily interested in showing how ‘linguistic-discursive practices’ are linked to ‘the wider socio-

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political structure of power and domination' (Kress, 1990: 85). As such, collocation as a kind of linguistic-discursive practice (Salama 2011) can provide an analyst with 'the basis of the social representation shared by members of a group' (van Dijk, 1998: 8).

CDA being multidisciplinary (van Dijk, 2001) allows for the use of computer programmes to identify collocates or lexically co-occurring lexical items in a corpus. Corpus linguistics (henceforth CL) tools packaged in computer software can rapidly and accurately extract and present collocational pairs with their numbers of occurrences across a corpus. CL is defined as the scientific "study of language based on examples of 'real life' language use" (McEnery and Wilson 2001:1). It involves analysis of large collection of data stored electronically with the aid of a computer software.

This study attempts to combine CL and CDA approaches in its examination of linguistic representation of men in female-authored articles in Nigerian newspapers. Baker et al (2008) note that each of these two somewhat dissimilar approaches is informed by a distinct theoretical framework and thus, their respective approaches to data analysis are influenced by their different underlying theoretical concepts. A CL-based approach appears to be very instrumental for describing recurrent patterns associated with specific words (or lexical items) across the entire corpus usually extracted with the aid of a computer software; while a CDA-informed approach is best suited for examining specific stretches of text at both micro and macro levels. Baker et al (2008) and, more recently, Salama (2011) have begun to call for an integrated approach that will bring CL and CDA together and stimulate a methodological synergy between quantitative and qualitative approaches to linguistic data analysis. The present study, therefore, employs a corpus-based feminist critical discourse analysis in its investigation of the way in which female writers/journalists represent men in Nigerian newspapers. Feminist critical discourse analysis (hereafter FCDA) draws on the theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches developed by critical discourse analysts to investigate discourses, which (re)produce or challenge conventional beliefs and gender representations (Lazar 2005).

Numerous studies have employed a methodological synergy of CL and CDA to researching various topics. For example, Baker et al (2008) have combined the two approaches to investigate media discourses of refugees and asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom. Also, examining religious discourse, Salama (2011) employed a similar approach in his investigation of how clashing ideologies have been actualized at collocational level across two opposing discourses on Wahhabi-Saudi Islam/Wahhabism. However, due to limitation of space, I cannot mention other studies that combine the two approaches.

The Corpus and Methodology

The corpus consists of 200 female-authored articles on gender and other related issues published in 5 Nigerian national newspapers namely; *The Guardian*, *Vanguard*, *The Punch*, *Daily Trust* and *New Nigerian* from 1999 to 2014. This period was selected because it witnessed an unprecedented surge in the waves of gendered discourses in Nigerian newspapers, perhaps, due to the return of democratic governance in the country after nearly two decades of military dictatorship. The return of democracy seems to expand the activities of many gender activists and conservative individuals and groups, who embark on socio-

political mobilization, using language to construct different identities as a tool for spreading discourses that can promote their diverging interests.

In collecting the sample data, all the selected articles were electronically scanned (through a machine with Optical Character Recognition [OCR] software). The scanned data was hand-checked, before it was converted into machine readable text, so that typographical errors could be corrected. The total size of the corpus was approximately 183, 047 words. As explained earlier, a methodological synergy of corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis was employed in the analysis. Using these two different but, complementary analytical techniques is justifiably important in this study because it allows the researcher "to build qualitatively on more reliably quantified textual features" (Salama 2011: 317). In other words, it provides diversified and more productive ways of analyzing the data.

Antconc corpus software version 3.4.3 (Anthony, 2014) is used in identifying the key words in the corpus. In this study, Scott and Tribble's (2006) view of *key words* is followed. These scholars define *key words* as those lexical items of significance to the text, because of their unusual occurrence in comparison with the reference corpus (Scott and Tribble 2006). International corpus of Nigerian English (ICE Nigeria) developed by the respected German Professor, Ulrike Gut was used as the reference corpus. The p value \leq was set at 0.00001, which has yielded a manageable number of key words. Following Salama (2011), the identified key words were further narrowed down in order to focus on those that seem most relevant to the study. Thus, the key word *men* (and its singular form *man*) were selected because they appear to be the most relevant in this respect.

Using this computer software (i.e. *Antconc*), a list of collocates of the key word MEN (and its singular variant) was extracted. *AntConc* software 'includes a tag aware concordance and plot distribution tool, word and keyword generators, and tools of cluster, N-gram and collocate analysis' (Baker 2009: 95). The node word MEN was identified to co-occur with other lexical items. In other words, it collocated significantly with other lexical items, in terms of collocational statistics of Mutual Information (MI) and t -scores, within the span of 5 words to the right and left of the search item. In this study, the collocational strength of the key word or what Kennedy calls 'target term, node word or search item' (1998: 251) is measured with t -score¹, because it indicates how strong the associations between collocating pairs or co- occurring lexical items is (Church and Hanks 1990, in McEnery, et al 2006:57); it also 'tends to show high-frequency [collocating] pairs' (Church and Hanks 1990, in McEnery, et al, *ibid*). Note that 'a t -score of 2 or higher is considered to be statistically significant' (McEnery, et al 2006:57). Therefore, collocating pairs with a t -score of 2 or higher were considered for analysis.

¹ In corpus linguistics, collocation is statistically determined and t -score is one of such statistical tools used. Computer programmes (or corpus and concordance software) used this statistical tool (i.e. t -score) to measure of how certain we can be that the collocation is the result of more than the vagaries of a particular corpus.

Analysis

As I have said earlier, the search item MEN/MAN has been identified to have collocates that may point to ways in which men are represented by women in Nigerian newspapers. In the coming subsections, the relevant collocates of the node word and its corresponding ideological representations of men are examined in some detail.

Patterns of collocation and representation of men in female-authored sub-corpus

Men form an important theme in many female-authored articles in Nigerian newspapers. In this section, I will examine some of the most recurrent patterns of collocation in order to identify the salient discourses surrounding men and/or patterns of their representation in female-authored newspaper articles. I, therefore, intend to analyze how the node word or the search item MEN/MAN patterns with other lexical items to create certain meaning relations or what Stubbs (2007:178) calls “discourse prosody”, which, as Jaworska and Krishnamurthy (2012:406) note, can point to some salient ideologies associated a particular subject or, men in this case. *AntConc* corpus software (Anthony, 2014) was used to extract collocates of the node word.

Table 1. The 10 most frequent collocates of MEN/MAN.

| Search item | Collocates | Freq. | t-score |
|-------------|------------|-------|----------|
| MEN/MAN | the | 795 | 26.68767 |
| | a | 557 | 22.85815 |
| | to | 507 | 21.32086 |
| | and | 371 | 18.04258 |
| | of | 314 | 16.39003 |
| | that | 270 | 15.68526 |
| | in | 269 | 15.34649 |
| | is | 262 | 15.32266 |
| | are | 201 | 13.63474 |
| | for | 163 | 12.08121 |

As could be seen from the table above, the most frequent collocates of the search term MEN/MAN are grammatical words, mainly articles, prepositions, conjunctions and some forms of the verb ‘to be’. Some of these words have combined with the node word (MEN/MAN) to form recurrent lexico-grammatical patterns, which seem worth exploring here. However, the analysis was restricted to the following lexico-grammatical patterns: *men/man to* (314), *men and* (270) and *man is* (269) because, they seem to create certain meaning relations (Salama, 2011) that has discursively constructed specific gender identities for men. The analysis was also limited to *some* (76), *like* (40) and *want* (42) lexical collocates. Note that the words MEN/MAN are treated as one search item or node word because they both denote masculine gender.

Table 2. The 10 top lexical collocates of MEN/MAN.

| Search item | Collocates | Freq. | t-score |
|-------------|------------|-------|----------|
| MEN/MAN | women | 238 | 14.64653 |
| | woman | 107 | 9.93762 |
| | not | 106 | 9.73256 |
| | some | 76 | 8.47235 |
| | do | 65 | 7.74378 |
| | more | 64 | 7.77775 |
| | because | 59 | 7.36582 |
| | want | 42 | 6.34050 |
| | like | 40 | 6.10412 |
| | ego | 31 | 5.88816 |

Men as the privileged gender

The word *to*, collocates with the search item MEN/MAN 507 times (see Table 1). In 73% of cases, *men/man to* lexico-grammatical pattern is surrounded by discourses that depict

men as the privileged gender. Figure 1 shows a sample of concordances for this pattern.



Fig. 1. Sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with to.

It was suggested that men have the rights to beat, divorce, chastise, control and dictate to the woman (see lines 15, 18, 22 and 25 in the Figure above). This pattern of representation confirms Majstorović and Lassen’s (2011) notion that in a patriarchal society, men are usually the privileged group who benefits from what the system puts in place in terms of gender power relations. Men, I will show in the next subsection, are also represented as the superior gender.

Men as the superior gender

The discourse pattern observed here seems to echo the discourse of men as the privileged gender discussed in the preceding subsection. Out of the 372 instances in which the word MEN/MAN has combined with *and*, 164 placed males above the females. Consider a sample of concordances for this pattern in the Figure below.



Fig. 2. Sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with and.

Notably most of the lines in the Figure above have portrayed patriarchal discourses which, as Coates (2004:216) opines, “assume the superiority of males”. What is however more interesting here, is the way the myth of creation in some religious texts (e.g. Bible) was drawn upon to ascribe to the man the power or role in the creation of the woman. This discourse, according to Hussein, emerges “from the view that men are the normative model of humanity and women are an afterthought” (2005:67). Examine the examples below (expansions of lines 19 and 21 in Figure 15).

As a special creature, *a woman was made from man* and she was offered as a divine gift to him. *Even her God-ordained duty is to be man's helpmate.* (emphasis mine)

Generally, the beliefs that since *a woman was created out of a man, and he is the head of the family, the woman should be subservient to him at all times...* In fact, *this is the guiding principles that govern Christian women who are the most submissive.* (emphasis mine)

In the examples above, the man is not only represented as the superior gender but also, ascribed leadership role. The woman on the other hand, is portrayed as his 'helpmate' who is also, expected to remain subservient to him as the highlighted parts in the excerpts above explicitly showed. It is also significant how the woman is described as 'divine gift' to the man, a representation that constructed her as a 'commodity' for the exclusive use of the man. Note also how language is appropriated in the control of behavior and reproduction of ideology of male superiority – submission to the will of men is constructed as a behavior expected of religious women or, Christian women in this case, as specified in the excerpt. The expression '*...this is the guiding principles that govern Christian women*' can for instance, be taken as an example of how religion is used to promote patriarchal ideology or unequal gender relations.

Proceeding with the foregoing analysis, the discourse in the expanded version of line 25 in Figure 2 '*From the beginning, man has dominion over the woman, every woman should have a man, and every man ought to have a woman behind him*' shows how heteronormativity (Coates, 2004: 219) is imposed on both women and men. Heteronormativity, as Coates defines it, is a term used to refer to a system in which heterosexual identities, relationships and practices are seen as the norm, to which everyone is expected to confirm (see Coates, 2004; see also Remlinger, 2005 for a detailed discussion). The discourse of heteronormativity in the excerpt above implicitly states that marital relation is the most (or only) fitting between people of opposite sexes.

Of significance in the excerpt above is the claim that '*man has dominion over the woman*', which depicts men perceived superiority as natural and therefore, normal. However, an examination of other concordances for this pattern reveals that a couple of instances in which these female writers/journalists have produced what Baker (2006: 114) calls "resistant discourses", which challenge or criticize the dominant discourse observed in the pattern. Perhaps, this is because it appears that cultural norms in the larger Nigerian society abhors at women challenging or criticizing men publically, revealing what Mills (1992:172) refers to as inability of women to "break through the restrictive patriarchal frames" due to cultural restrictions. In the next subsection, I will show how women consciously (or, unconsciously) reproduce a discourse that represents men as natural leaders (of the family) – a discourse which further reinforces the ideology of male superiority.

Men as the leaders

According to Magalhães (2005: 183), the discourse of men as the leaders, perpetuates the stereotypical role of men as heads of households and providers (of their families). In many traditional African societies, men are generally seen as the leaders. This mode of thought or belief is reflected in the data. In several instances, the word 'head' – connoting a

leader functions as a complement to the search item MEN/MAN. An examination of 262 cases in which the node word MEN/MAN collocates with *is* clearly reveals the tendency of women or female writers/journalists to ascribe leadership role to the man or the male gender. Out of these 262 instances, 152 ascribed leadership role to the man. A sample of these instances is provided in the Figure below.

| | |
|----|--|
| 36 | that the woman is inferior! As the head, the man is supposed to lead the woman and love her. |
| 37 | that he can do so? By his advantage, the man is supposed to rescue the woman from the hands of the devil. |
| 38 | plays a very important role in the family. Every man is supposed to take part in the affairs of the family. |
| 39 | de facto head of the home and oppress the man is tantamount to playing with fire. If you destroy your home, soon you will be the boss of an empty home. |
| 40 | lazy you. My advice for this lazy type of men is that they should wake up and provide for their wives. |
| 41 | is of conversations I've had with women and men - is that you have an absolutely screwed up relationship. |
| 42 | man of God, Shobajoy states, "I know that the man is the head of the woman, but to a woman, the man is the head of the household while the woman is just the head of the household." |
| 43 | categories of men. By divine injunction, the man is the head of the household while the woman is just the head of the household. |
| 44 | we been made to be submissive because the man is the head while the woman is just the head of the household. |
| 45 | ion. We have been raised to accept that "the man is the head of the family" and even in the modern world, the man is the head of the family. |

Fig. 3. Sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with *is*.

Obviously, in the light of the discourses in the Figure above, one's assumption about the tendency of some female writers/journalists to represent men or the male gender as leaders and providers – based on the analysis of many other similar examples in the data – is almost certainly factual. Expressions such as 'the man is supposed to lead the woman' (line 36), 'the man is supposed to rescue the woman' (line 37), 'they [men] should wake up and provide for their wives' (line 40), etc., seem to portray a patriarchal discourse which emphasizes meanings and values which, as Coates (2004:216) opines, "assume the superiority of males". Implicit in these discourses, is the appropriation of language to control the behaviour of women, and reproduce male supremacy ideology. Consider the example (an expansion of line 39 in Figure 3) below.

Modern-day equality in marriage does not mean competition. It simply means partnership. *Taking advantage of such equality to turn around and become the de facto head of the home and oppress the man is tantamount to playing with fire.* If you destroy your home, soon you will be the boss of an empty home. (emphasis mine)

A number of meanings could be derived from the excerpt above. First, notwithstanding modernization or western civilization which leads to increased recognition of women's right, women should not allow this, to change their perception of the man as the head of the family. Second, any attempt by a woman to resist or contest the 'traditional' position of the man (in the family) can be dangerous or, even harmful (to her) as the metaphor '*playing with fire*' implicitly communicates. Third, it also suggests that a woman who wants to build her home should never seek to become the leader of the family and; finally, that without the man, a home is incomplete and 'empty', suggesting the importance of the man in the family. This kind of discourse implicitly suggests that the woman should not attempt to usurp the power that did not belong to her in the traditional society.

Men as needing better care from women

This is the most recurrent discourse that has occurred within the vicinity of MAN/MEN + *want* pattern. In most of

the instances where this pattern occur, men are portrayed as needing or deserving better care or treatment from women, suggesting a discourse that emphasizes self-denial and husband centeredness.

This discourse seems to portray men as “good guys” who wants total commitment or devotion from the woman in a relationship, implicitly asking the woman to continue performing her traditional role of homemaking and caregiving as stated in, for instance, lines 25, 29 and 31 in the Figure below.

| | | |
|----|--|---------------------|
| 25 | as a wife." It's not chauvinistic for every man to want to come back home to a cosy, | Trust female |
| 26 | y improved her marriage. Secret #4: Most men truly want to make their marriages work. | Trust female |
| 27 | state that can only stand when supported. Men want a manipulative-free relationship | Men: Guardian Fe |
| 28 | ly misinterpreted. We need to realize that men want and need straightforward, courageou | Guardian Fe |
| 29 | o give grains to his partner and eat stones. Men want fidelity and a Commitment to the Re | Guardian Fe |
| 30 | n that make them leave us. What we think men want from us causes us to have resentmen | Guardian Fe |
| 31 | ands from wives and children. What most men want is a warm welcome and time to relax, | New Nigeria |
| 32 | municate your truth and needs effectively. Men want secure and confident woman | Men wa: Guardian Fe |
| 33 | men questioned. Is that a joke? Why will a man want to be given leave let alone being paid | Trust female |

Fig. 4. Sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with want.

What is even more interesting here is the used of metaphors to describe the man as needing or deserving better care from the woman. Consider the conceptualizations of men in the Figure below.

| | | |
|----|---|--------------|
| 15 | find other sources of happiness because men are generally like a guinea fowl, which cann | Punch femal |
| 16 | nat women want – a whole partner. They [men] are just like a wooden slate that can only | Guardian Fe |
| 17 | tworthy or truthful. They don't know that men are like a puff-adder, when it lay down you | Guardian Fe |
| 18 | o for. We should also understand that our men are like a wooden slate that can only stand | New Nigeria |
| 19 | t he cannot even buy for himself because men are like a cock, they give grains and eat | Trust female |
| 20 | their husbands in the cold. Forgetting that men are like Bluetooth, they connect with any wo | Punch femal |
| 21 | o their husbands to other women because men are like Bluetooth they connect with any wo | Punch femal |
| 22 | r husband first to get those basic things? Men are like entrepreneurs, they easily get irrita | Trust female |
| 23 | es. The earlier a woman understands that men are like guinea fowl, which cannot roost on | Trust female |
| 25 | him go to any extent to make you happy. Men, believe me, are like a cock that give grains | Guardian Fe |

Fig. 5. Sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with like.

As could be seen from the Figure above, men are conceptualized as ‘guinea fowl’ (lines 15 and 23), which ‘cannot roost on the bare floor’ as stated in the expanded version of the lines. This kind of representation constructs men as needing or deserving ‘VIP’ treatment from women. It is also interesting how instrumental rationalization (van Leeuwen, 2008) is used to persuade the woman to remain devoted to her traditional role. The metaphor ‘men are like a cock, they give grains and eat stones’ (lines 19 and 25) did not only represents men as providers but also, foregrounds their tendency to provide things to the woman, things which they (men) cannot afford to buy or use for their own selves.

Interestingly, men are also metaphorically described as ‘puff-adder’ (line 17 in Figure 18) – a negative representation, one may be tempted to say. However, an examination of the context in which this metaphor was used suggests the opposite.

Sunday magazine asked the Delta woman married to an Ogun man the causes of tough times many women cope with in their homes. Her response: “Many women behave like a hare; they like to play pranks, cut corners, play on people’s intelligence or prove that they are smart. Some even take their husbands for granted thinking they should understand or overlook their misconduct or inanities [...] they don’t know that men are like a puff-adder, when it lay down you can take it for granted and even confuse it with a limb of a felled tree. But dare step on it, it will leave you with deadly scars.” (emphasis mine).

From the excerpt above, it is clear that the woman (not the man) is the subject of the negative representation here. What is even more intriguing is that a woman is the one who was reproducing this kind of discourse, which portrays women negatively, supporting Daniel’s argument that “women are sometimes complicitous in their negative portrayal in the media” (2011:127).

Again, given the context in which this metaphor occurred, it can be argued that the purpose of using it is to advice or warn the woman against the danger of taking the man for granted, as he could cause pain or even death to a woman who behaves harshly or contemptuously towards him. This kind of representation can create fear in some women – a fear that can discourage them from seeking to resist male domination, because of the potential danger portrayed in, for instance, the excerpt above.

Of significance also is the conceptualization of men as ‘Bluetooth’ (lines 20 and 21), which as further examination of the concordances revealed, constructs them (men) as ‘unfaithful’ – a negative representation. It is this kind of negative representation of the male gender I shall turn to in the remainder of this paper.

Men as self-centered and oppressive

This is the salient discourse that emerges from the examination of concordances for *some men* pattern. In more than 80% of instances where the search item MAN/MEN collocates with *some*, the word *men* is (attributively) pre-modified by *some* as a way into negative representation of men without risking or inviting backlash from some men who may feel offended or threatened, because it appears that the norms of the society do not expect a woman to say bad things against men or challenge them publically. Hence, the use of the adjective ‘some’ to mitigate or, as Fraser (1980:344) would put it, “to ease the anticipated unwelcome effect” of negative representation of men or an argument against them.



Fig. 6. A snapshot of sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with like.

An examination of the concordances for *some men* pattern reveals that in 59% of cases, men are represented negatively (see Figure 6 for a sample of the concordances for the pattern). Here, most of the concordance lines suggest negative discourse prosody of men. In lines 42 and 43 *some men* are described as 'selfish'. In lines 49 and 50 *some men* are reported as being engaged in polygamy. Lines 45, 54 and 57 are about the oppressive tendency of *some men*. In line 48, *some men* are characterized as being arrogant. *Some men* are also portrayed as being discriminatory against female kids (line 52), etc. Seemingly, the discourse here emphasizes specific 'negative' attitudes of men, and de-emphasizes other attitudes the reader and by extension the woman, might have experienced with them (men).

Men as egotistic

This discourse is closely related, and indeed, an extension of '*men as self-centered and oppressive*' discourse discussed in the preceding subsection. This pattern identifies men as generally egotistic. Figure 20 shows a sample of concordances for the pattern.



Fig. 7. A snapshot of sample concordances for MAN/MEN when it collocates with ego.

As could be seen from the Figure above, men are characterized as egotistic. What is however intriguing here is that women are on one hand encouraged to do things that could boost the ego of men, and on the other they are blamed for encouraging or, 'watering' the ego in men. Examine the examples below (expansions of lines 6 and 9 in Figure 7).

Usually, men have high ego, they do not want to be mocked, criticized or looked

down upon, so make him feel like a man, by boosting his ego. It makes him feel good and keep running back to you. (emphasis mine) ...it is all about male chauvinism which women encourage. Women encourage the ego of men because they celebrate getting married like it is a ticket to heaven. They see themselves as being victorious for the man to have chosen them among several other ladies. They worship the man and water his ego as if he is her all in all. (emphasis mine)

Conclusion

As a recurrent theme in many female-authored newspaper articles, men have been viewed differently by women and this is reflected in the contradictory identities they constructed for men in the corpus. Analysis of collocates of the node word MEN has revealed that women depict men as both the "problem" and the "answer". This is evidenced by the prevalence of discourses that construct men as oppressors on one hand, and providers and leaders on the other. These contradictory patterns of representation are understood in this paper as examples of 'textual heterogeneity' as exemplified by the range of different identities women construct for men. Moreover, these patterns of representations can also be seen as both reinforcing and resisting the gendered inequality existing in the Nigerian society.

Furthermore, the analysis has also provided relevant information about the power relations between men and women in Nigerian society, since it reveals that the traditional stereotypes by means of which men have for long been described are still been (re)produced by women, helping to perpetuate the traditional social roles of men in society. It is evident that the linguistic choices made by women in describing or making reference to men create and reflect the unequal power relations between the two genders.

Methodologically, the present study has further shown the viability of a methodological synergy of Corpus Linguistics with Critical Discourse Analysis to researching language and gender. However, it should be noted that the methodology offered here has its own limitations. For example, corpus data is usually only language data and discourse is not confined to language only. Additionally, frequent patterns do not always point to dominant discourses. For future research, I would like to suggest that the same methodology should be used to different genres and discourse domains, other than just language and gender.

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