

**DISCOURSE OF KNOWLEDGE VERSUS DISCOURSE OF SELF-LEGITIMATION IN
CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN POPULAR LITERATURE: AN ENQUIRY INTO
ADEBAYO BELLO'S SELF-HELP PAMPHLETS.**

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Abstract

Several studies have been done on the growing trends in African popular literature, particularly the Onitsha market literature. Most of these works have been carried out by established scholars such as Emmanuel Obiechina, Bernth Lindfors and Stephanie Newell. While Obiechina and Lindfors studied what may be called “the first generation” of African popular literature authors, Newell extended the discourse by investigating the works of largely “unknown” authors, particularly women whose works were on Christian and secular matters. This study draws from both perspectives but however differs from them because it seems to be the first critical study on Adebayo Bello, a prolific Nigerian writer whose work is yet to receive any critical attention. Based on insights from Obiechina and Newell, this study examined the major thematic and stylistic patterns of Bello’s pamphlets. It looked at how the deployment of linguistic resources enhanced the writer’s rhetoric on the issues he engaged in the texts. This study also showed how the resources of print culture in Nigeria enabled the writer to legitimize self as an expert authority and concluded that Bello’s self-help texts, like most self-help pamphlets, are “shaky guide posts” that should not be held as canonical truth because they are for self-legitimation and lack in-depth scholarly orientation.

Key Words: Self-help pamphlets, popular literature, Adebayo Bello, discourse, knowledge, self-legitimation

Introduction

Self-help pamphlets and popular literature in general constitute a huge percentage of the literary production in Africa. Self-help pamphlets are one of the most prolific, widely read and commercially acclaimed book genres in pre and postcolonial Nigeria. A self-help pamphlet is a kind of book that highlights a particular problem and claims to proffer solution to it. The problems and solutions are usually found in the title and subtitle of such books. However, despite its popularity, the practice of reading and consuming self-help pamphlets is yet to receive the scholarly and critical attention it deserves particularly in this part of the world. Obiechina (1973) posits that the first popular pamphlets in Nigeria appeared in Onitsha in 1947 but it “...was not until fifteen years later that commentaries on them began to appear” (2). Ulli Beier was the first scholar to publish an article on West African popular literature in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 10 August 1962. Other scholars such as Nwoga, Obiechina, Mezu, Lindfors,

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Reed, Collins and a handful of others later extended the critical focus and discourse on African chapbooks, particularly on the so called Onitsha Market Literature (OML henceforth). This effort which started in the 1960s received much scholarly impetus and vibrancy up until the twilight of the last century. The study of Nigerian and African popular literature has suffered a great deal of intellectual neglect in the 21st century and would have gone into oblivion but for the efforts of scholars like Okome Onookome and Stephanie Newell.

The phrase “Popular literature” is certainly a difficult term to grapple with in terms of semantics and scope. Obiechina (1973) perceives popular literature in terms of any literature which appeals to the masses which must have at least three predictable characteristics: it must be simple in language and technique; it must be brief; and it must be cheap” (10). Lindfors (1991) however argues that African popular literature is not mass literature because the masses either cannot all read the same language or else cannot read at all (1). He therefore contends that a more satisfactory criterion would be the idiom in which the ideas are articulated. Thus, “any work that seeks to communicate an African perspective to a large audience in a style that can be readily apprehended and appreciated could legitimately be called a piece of African popular literature” (2). Consequently, he posits that:

...the novels of Armah, Achebe, and Ngugi, the short stories of La Guma, Rive, and Mphahlele, the poetry of p'Bitek, Mtshali and Brutus, the pornography of Osahon and Maillu, the pamphlet literature of Onitsha and Nairobi, and the Zulu musicals brought to London in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be discussed together as disparate manifestations of essentially the same creative impulse: the will to speak directly to as many people as possible. There is little obscurity or subterfuge in this kind of literature because the author is intent on making an immediate impact. He wants his art to be understood. Though he may aim his message principally at his countrymen, anyone who happens to be within earshot should be able to grasp what he is saying (2).

Newell (2002) suggests that “popular fiction” in Africa should be understood as “...those types of narrative which never fail to generate debate amongst readers on moral and behavioural issues. In terms of their appeal, such narratives are popular in the sense of being in demand by African readers; in terms of their *content*, these texts are popular in the sense of containing ubiquitous character types and plots, reworked with each re-usage by authors” (5). Obiechina records that Nigerian pamphlet literature first emerged in Onitsha in 1947 when Tabansi Bookshop, a local bookselling company, published two booklets by Cyprian Ekwensi: *Ikolo the Wrestler* and *When Love Whispers*. The first was a collection of Igbo folktales while the second was a romantic love story. They were immediately followed by Chike Okonyia's two short stories in a booklet called *Tragic Niger Tales*. These pamphlets instantly became popular especially among young grammar school boys and girls because of their simplicity and accessibility and the fact that they address issues that appealed to the sensibilities of the youth. The pamphlet literature involved a group of people in the various functions of publications such as the author, publishers, printers, promoters, and distributors. Pamphlet publishing became a lucrative industry especially in the 1960s. The printing of the pamphlets which originally began in Onitsha later spread to several parts of the country like Aba, Port Harcourt, Enugu, and even parts of the defunct Western region such as Lagos and Ibadan.

Several factors gave rise to pamphleteering in Onitsha and they include: the favourable location of the town to the populated eastern region; the operation of early European missionaries which made Onitsha a commercial venture in the eastern Nigeria as well as the emergence of individual ownership of printing presses. The influx of Indian and Victorian pulp magazine fiction in the 1940s also gave impetus to pamphleteering in Onitsha and the whole of Nigeria. Another important factor was the overwhelming surge for literacy after the Second World War. Obiechina (1973) records there was a flourishing of what could largely be called the “democratic spirit” (5). He notes that “the democratic spirit leads to a highly developed sense of human awareness and the insistence of individuals on the relevance of their feelings and relationship” (5, See Obiechina, 1973 for the history and growth of OML). Obiechina (1973) and Newell (2005 & 2008) observe that the dominant themes in OML and other Nigerian and West African pamphlet literature include those of marriage and relationships, rules and guidelines on how to live a happy life, secure lucrative jobs, survive in the wilderness of the city among others. Most of these pamphlets provide general advice on how to cope with city life. As Newell (2008) notes, “while the connection between the rise of African popular literature and urbanization on the continent are not simple or unidirectional, we can situate key literary themes and genres in relation to the 20th-century city. In particular...self-help texts offer advice to readers on how to survive emotionally in the urban areas, and they explore the individual’s loss of control in environments populated by large numbers of strangers” (18). Thus, most of the self-help pamphlets are didactic and claim to offer their readers guides on how to survive the uncertainties of urban life.

Major Themes in Adebayo Bello’s Pamphlets

OML and other “How to -” pamphlets are generally perceived as problem-solving texts, because they claim to proffer solutions to many of the problems arising from the complexities of modern life. They concern themselves with providing guides on how to make money, pass examinations, current affairs, fall in and out of love, cook, enjoy blissful marital relationships, self improvement, and so on. Adebayo Bello’s *1200 African Proverbs and their Meanings* and *Idiomatic Expressions and their Meanings* follow the tradition of OML in trying to educate and enlightening those who need such information for the purposes of examination, job interviews or self-education. Again, the theme of love, marriage and relationship receive generous attention from Adebayo Bello. The themes of love, marriage, and general knowledge Bello’s pamphlets are briefly examined below.

Theme of love

Love has been one of the greatest concerns of most pamphleteers like Adebayo Bello. Obiechina contends that “some pamphlet authors regard the pursuit of love as an art, with a certain mystique and requiring, for success, the application of the right techniques. They believe that these can be successfully taught. They therefore produce works to teach others the art and technique of love” (62). Pamphlet authors explicitly or implicitly make claims to having the right knowledge and understanding about love and therefore proceed to churn out works that teach people the art of love. In line with this, Adebayo Bello produced some texts that are essentially dedicated to teaching his readers the art of love. Some of them include *100 Ways You Can Show Love to Your Wife* (100 Ways henceforth) and *23 Secret to Know a Relationship that Will not Work* [sic] (23 Secret henceforth).

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These pamphlets contain the Dos and Don'ts for a blissful love relationships. *23 Secret* in particular advises women to let their male lovers "know right off the bat (sic) that no sex is one of your boundaries and that she will not give in" (37). Here, the writer seems to preaching against pre-marital sex. He believes the relationship will be blissful if sex is kept out of it before marriage. Similarly in *12 Rules for Single Ladies Who Wish to Get Married (12 Rules henceforth)* Bello asserts that "the more a single lady parts her thighs for a man, the more he loses interest in her, but the stingier she is with her thighs, the more desperate he becomes to see them" (34-35). In *100 Ways* he advises the man to "be patient" with his spouse, "listen to her when she is talking", and to "value her individually", etc. Besides the issue of premarital sex he also advises against financial exploitation by lovers, crass materialism, bad manners, keeping a bad company, and so many other attitudes that can endanger relationships. The author confidently believes that anyone who follows his prescriptions will experience a blissful love relationship.

Theme of Marriage

Love and marriage are related because most marriages start with love relationships between two singles. Marriage is an important theme in OML and other popular literary texts because it addresses the many problems that affect individuals. Thus the Onitsha market pamphleteers step in to proffer solutions in that direction. According to Obiechina:

In a rapidly changing society, with confusion of ideals and conflict of values, the popular authors feel called upon to throw some light on the main sources of the unhappiness of individuals in their aspiration of marriage and to warn against the dangers of injudicious choice of marriage partners" (56).

In the same vein, Newell (2008) posits that "self-help literature is preoccupied with the theme of marriage. The reader's correct choice of marriage partner and subsequent happiness in the home are fundamental concerns of the genre" (15). The above shows how important the issue of marriage is to authors of pamphlets of self-help subgenre. Following the already well established pattern, Bello produced simple, affordable and brief pamphlets containing advice and prescriptions for successful marriages. He emphasized the need for mutual respect between husband and wife, and wifely submission in the marital home. For example, in *12 Rules*, the woman is advised not to choose a husband based on her romantic picture of "Mr. Right" as the man could in actual fact be God's "Mr. Wrong". He associates any relationship with Mr. Wrong as leading to pains, regrets, failed and eventually divorce. In *23 Secret* women are advised to dress beautifully and decently for their husbands - "Dress nice therefore as you can't tell, the fate of your relationship might just depend on it" (33). In *10 Things Every Woman Must Do to Keep Her Husband away from Women (10 Things henceforth)* the author advises women to master the art of cooking as "...a woman that does not know how to cook delicious meals may be endangering her marriage" (22). This supports the adage that a way to man's heart is through his stomach. In *100 Ways* a man is advised on several ways to show love to his wife so as to enjoy a blissful home. Bello claims that his pamphlets will help people (particularly women) to gain knowledge and realize their potential in relationships. His texts promise to furnish the reader

with the tool for individual self-realization, empowerment and emotional tool for self control love and marriage.

Issues on General Knowledge

As we pointed out at the beginning of this study, pamphleteers of self-help literature see it as their God-given responsibility to educate and enlighten the reader on educational matters which they believe the reader may need to be successful in examinations, job interviews and for self improvement. Bello's *1200 African Proverbs and their Meanings* and *Idiomatic Expressions and their Meanings* are intended to help the reader acquire new knowledge, pass examinations or be successful at job interviews where their knowledge of proverbs and idiomatic expressions may be required. By this Bello gives the impression of being greatly endowed with knowledge of other spheres of life other than love and marriage. When all his titles are put on display, the different subject matters covered in the books will surely mislead the gullible reader that the author must be vast, experienced and well educated. Treating different subject matters is a strategy the author uses to legitimize his competence and authority and present self as an expert in those domains of knowledge covered in the texts and thus attract more patronage from his potential readers.

Stylistic Features of Bello's Pamphlets

Language is used to express a speaker/writer's sensations, perceptions, ideologies and experiences. Speakers/Writers use the resources of language to communicate information as well as to project their personal idiosyncrasies. That distinct quality that separates one speaker/writer from another is known in linguistics as "idiolect". In this part of the study we examine briefly some of the stylistic features of Adebayo Bello's language. Newell (2002) contends that "...the definitive feature of African popular art forms is their lack of formal and stylistic regulation from 'outside.'" Our concern is to see how his deployment of the resources of language enhances our understanding of his efforts at self-legitimation. Language can lead the hearer/reader to make some assumptions about the background and ideology of a discourse participant.

Linguistic Features

According to Obiechina, the pamphlet authors are amateur writers. He notes that "a large number of pamphlet authors are primary school teachers, local printing-press owners and book sellers but a considerable number of them are also journalists, railway men, traders, clerks artisans, farmers, and even grammar school boys" (12). This implies that some members of this group may not have strong command of the English Language – the medium of communication - and therefore most likely to use fractured English in their writings. Because of the constraints of space we shall examine some of the grammatical errors in the texts under study, especially those that occur at concord and tense levels. Most of the errors are avoidable hence their preponderance in Adebayo's texts lead the reader to make some assumptions about his educational background and competence in the spheres of knowledge he presents himself as an expert authority.

Concord/possessive

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Concord is an agreement in number, gender, and tense. Bello's texts are replete with concord errors some of which are presented below. The errors are highlighted in bold print for emphasis.

- 1 "... the **young ladies** (who have a womanly body though **she was** only 20) was simply overjoyed." (13) – *Mistakes*. The phrase "young ladies" does not concur with "was" in number. **Ladies** is a plural marker while **was** is a singular marker.
2. "Both lovebirds keep contacting **one another** for the first months" (21) - *Mistakes*
"One another" is used instead of "each other."
- 3 "All the days of **my husband life**, his going out and his coming in shall be a blessing to me and my family" (32) – *10 Things*. Here "my husband life" instead of "my husband's life".
4. "God will change **my husband name** and people **will called** us house of God, and we shall be the gate of heaven" (33) – *10 Things*. "...my husband's name" and "people will call us" are the appropriate expressions. The possessive marker is omitted in the expression.
5. "... any altar of the devil **who believe** that **they** can **hold** my husband blessings be destroy in the name of Jesus name" (32) - *10 Things*. An altar is not human, so the use of the relative pronoun "who" and the third person plural pronoun "they" are inappropriate. The singular verb, "believes", would have been more appropriate to denote a singular notion. Again, "withhold" would have been more appropriate in the context of the prayer.

Tense

Tense is a form of verb that is used to show the time of an action or state expressed by the verb (the past, the present, and the future). Below are some of the errors in tenses found in Bello's texts. The wrong tenses are highlighted in bold print.

- 1: "my husband (sic) life shall **received** blessing, any altar of the devil who believe they (sic) can hold my husband (sic) blessings be destroy in Jesus name." – *10 Things*
Shall is a modal auxiliary verb and whenever there is an auxiliary and a main verb in a sentence, the future tense and aspects are realized in the main verb and not in the auxiliary verb. Thus, the verb should have been in the present as "receive."
- 2: "Because we stay in the Lord (sic), he will **brought** us into favour, tender love and **blessed** us wherever we go" (33) – *10 Things*. The two verbs – brought and blessed – should have been in the present tense form to underlie the notion of expectations.
3. "Moses stood in the gap and lifted his staff, the Israelites **suppress** the Amalekites and anytime his hand **becomes** weak, the Amalekites **prevail** against the Israelites" (17) – *10 Things*. The highlighted verbs (suppress, becomes and prevail) should have been in the past tense form because the preceding verbs (stood and lifted) are in the past and the Biblical narrative being intertextually referred to occurred in the historical past.

Formal Structures – Format and Style Conventions

Books as printed materials have become the power house of knowledge. Otagburuagu and Anyanwu (2002) define a book as "an intellectual and artistic creation which has a definite form, theme and focus" (239). A book can be said to be a non-periodical publication of at least forty nine pages exclusive of the covers. A book is different from pamphlet, magazine and hand-out. A pamphlet is a publication which may be bound between covers but may comprise five to forty eight pages inclusive of the covers. Bello's texts can legitimately be called pamphlets because they comprise five to forty eight pages inclusive of the covers, and it is OML in the

main because of the inconsistencies in their features. A close examination of Bello's pamphlets (which he calls books) reveals they are completely deviant from global best practices in the book industry. Some of these deviant features are examined below.

Preliminary Pages

The folio of the preliminary pages (front matters) in Bello's titles: *10 Things*; *23 Secret (sic)*; *Idiomatic Expressions*; *100 Ways*; *African Proverbs*; and *Mistakes* are in Arabic numerals instead of roman figure. In books of international standards, the preliminary pages are written or numbered in roman figures while the main texts are paginated/numbered in Arabic numerals. Bello's non-compliance with this convention marks him as an amateur/ nonprofessional in the publishing world.

Pagination

In international book practices, the cover page and the inside cover page are not paginated and as such are not counted or regarded as part of the main text. This is not the case with all of Bello's titles - he paginates the cover page and even the inside cover page (though in silent mode). It therefore means that the cover page and inside cover page and the preliminary pages are regarded as part of the main text of the book. This apparent deficiency is what gives Bello's texts the signature of market/substandard pamphlets.

Half Title and Imprint Page

The pamphlets produced by Bello do not have half title pages as expected of most books of international standard. They equally do not have separate title pages. The title pages are the same as the imprint pages. The titles and publication details are sometimes contained in the title pages. This can be found in his titles such as *10 Things* and *23 Secret*. It shows they did not pass through standard publishing process.

Title Inconsistencies

Some of his pamphlets show inconsistencies in the title on the cover page and the one in the title page. For example, we notice in the pamphlet entitled *African Proverbs + English Proverbs* that it has a subtitle framed "categories included" with fourteen items listed under it. However, in the title page these items under "categories included" were omitted with no justification for that. Similarly, in *12 Rules*, the title page differs from what is in the cover page. In the title page, we notice that the phrase "without tears" was omitted. Again in *10 Things* the title in the cover page and the one in the title page differ from each other. The author included "plus prayer every woman must pray that will bring daily blessings to her husband" in the title page – this was not in the cover page. This obvious lapse in the standard book convention stems from the fact that the author/publisher is an amateur/nonprofessional with little knowledge in book publication.

Publication Details

The information on the publisher is confusing and inconsistent. First, in standard books such details are found on the imprint page but in most of Bello's pamphlets this information is

found at the bottom part of the back cover which ordinarily should be a place for the blurb and related matters. We also discovered three different strands on the information on the publisher. The first information reads: "Published by B & T publications, 16 Ayinla Akinsola Street, Araromi B/stop Iyana-Ipaja Lagos". The second information reads: "Published by B & T publications, 16 Ayinla Akinsola Street, Araromi B/stop Iyana-Ipaja Lagos." The third information reads: "Marketed and Distributed by B & T Inc. 16, Ayinla, Akinsola Streets, Araromi B/stop, Iyana-Ipaja Lagos"

The only thing that is consistent about the publisher is its location which is 16 Ayinla Akinsola Streets Araromi B/Stop, Iyana-Ipaja Lagos. From the three pieces of information on the publisher it appears we are talking about three different entities. The first is a publisher and also a marketer of a product who is identified as B & T Publications; in the second we see an entity who is just a publisher and also identified as B & T publications; and in the third we see an entity who is concerned with the marketing and distribution of a product and that entity is identified as B & T Inc. In law we assume that B & T Inc is not the same as B & T publications or that B & T Publication may be a subsidiary of B & T Inc and vice versa.

The contact phone numbers on some of the books are six (6), some eight (8), and some as much as twelve (12) in some cases. All these appear to be a deliberate attempt to mislead the reader that B & T is a reputable company that offers diverse services like printing, publishing, marketing, and distribution of books. The multiple phone numbers also gives impression of its accessibility and capacity to reach every part of the country.

Publication/ Distribution Contact

In some of the books, the Aba and Onitsha contact "offices" are indicated with corresponding phone numbers without corresponding office addresses. For example, in *Mistakes*, the information on the branch offices reads thus:

Onitsha office call:
Ngozi 080534803020
Aba office call:
Ukpai & Chima
08033433618, 08033374761

For bulk buying contact the above address.

In the above, we can see the names of the individuals in Onitsha and Aba with their phone numbers who can be contacted for bulk purchases. The information is grossly misleading because it says the prospective buyer should contact the individuals in the "above address" whereas the publisher did not supply the address of the people to be contacted but rather gave out only their phone numbers. The message should have read "for bulk buying contact the above persons" and not "the address" as indicated in the book. All these are signatures of vanity publishing or self publishing.

His text entitled *1200 African Proverbs* has a place where it is **printed** and not **published**. In publishing, the printer may not necessarily be the publisher. In fact, the printer is not as important as the publisher because many publishers do not own a press and so make use of independent printers. However, what we notice in Bello's text is that the publisher is subordinated or completely non-existent while the printer is foregrounded or projected. This shows that the titles did not pass through standard publishing processes and this explains why

there are many inconsistencies in the editing and styling of the pamphlets. This is a popular feature in OML - their non-compliance with international book standards.

Author's Name

In Bello's work entitled *1200 African Proverbs*, the author's name is completely omitted in the cover page and only appeared in the title page. This shows the reader or buyer cannot know the author of the book from its cover page except he/she opens the title page. This style is inconsistent with global best practices in the book industry.

Title Page

In standard publishing, a book is supposed to have a half-title page and or a title page in addition to an imprint page. As we have pointed out earlier, an imprint page is supposed to contain information such as the full title of the book, the name of the author(s), and publication details such as year and place of publication. We have earlier noted that one feature of Bello's book is that some information that is supposed to be on the imprint page is located on the blurb part of the book. Thus, we have a scenario in which the publication information about the book is found on both the title page and on the cover page. This we can say is a strategy by the author to foreground his identity as printer/publisher. This is intended to catch the attention of prospective readers/distributors so that whoever that misses the information at the title page would not also miss it at the cover page.

Running Heads/footnotes

In some of the titles/pamphlets, the same items that serve as **running head** also serve as **footnotes**. In publishing, running heads are located at the top of each page and usually alternates between the title of the book and the title of the chapter but in Bello's case, the same information runs through the entire pages of the book and in some cases also repeated as footnotes. More strange is the fragmentation and near meaningless distortion and abuse of the tradition of the running heads as can be found in *10 Things*. The running head reads "10 things every woman" which is meaningless as it were. It would have been better if the book went without a running head than bear a meaningless phrase like we have noted. Even though the title of the book is long, a short form of running head would have read thus, "10 things every woman must do to keep her husband."

Blurb

All of Bello's texts/pamphlets with the exception of *10 Things* do not have a blurb in the true sense of the word. Traditionally, the blurb provides background information about the book and its author. That is, the author's qualification, experience and the reputation of the publisher are projected in front and back matters. It is believed that most writers who are proud of their academic or professional backgrounds flaunt them on the blurb/back cover of the book as a strategy of projecting self and conferring legitimacy on the title. What we have on the blurb part of Bello's titles are other books written/printed by the author/printer and the contact details where they can be purchased in bulk or retail. There is no information regarding his education and professional competence. This gives the impression the author has something to conceal about himself and that his primary goal is to sell his products.

Publication Dates

There are no publication dates in Bello's pamphlets. Traditionally, publication dates help in placing the text historically. It helps the reader to get information about the currency of the work from the copyright page. It is believed that the more recent a work is, the more it reflects current trends and views of the society. Its absence in Bello's book is a deliberate act by the author/publisher to conceal the obsolete nature of the pamphlets and give a false notion about its currency - a common feature of OML. Bello's pamphlets like other pamphlets hide their own historicity by omitting the production dates from the front and back matters. Newell (2008) observes that "the self-help pamphlet is a type of commodity which rejects its own history and refuses a sell-by date: it is a future oriented object which insists on its continuous presence in the reader's real-time" (.21).

International Standard Book Number (ISBN)

One of the features of a standard book is that it must possess an International Standard Book Number (ISBN). It is the ISBN that gives a book a distinct identity without which it will be difficult to catalogue such a book in the library. Libraries usually index a book with its ISBN for identification and recognition. ISBN is so important in publishing and librarianship that even E-versions of a book and audio versions are assigned different ISBN from its print version. This clearly shows the importance of ISBN in the construction of identity of a book. The fact that Bello's books do not have all the important features of a book reduces their value in public estimation, particularly for those who are conversant with the features/qualities of a standard book.

Page Numbering

In publishing, certain parts of a book like the half title page, the title page and the first chapter of a book must start on a **recto** page (right hand side of the book which is usually in odd numbers) but this is not the case in Bello's pamphlets. For examples, the chapter one of his pamphlets entitled *23 Secret* and *10 Things* start on the **verso** page (left hand side and in even numbers) instead of on a recto page. This shows that the books did not pass through a standard and reputable publisher.

Numbering of Contents

The items on the contents pages of Bello's texts are not properly numbered. We notice that in *Mistakes*, the contents are numbered according to the span of the information under reference, for instance, 7-11 instead of just 7 – the beginning of page. Again in some of the contents pages, the corresponding numbers are omitted – only the titles are provided. This will make it difficult for a reader to locate the items in the body of the book with ease. This goes a long way to show that both the author and publisher are not properly grounded in the standard book convention.

Page Extent

One significant feature in most of Bello's book is its scanty chapters. The page extents of his books are between one to two pages thereby creating a limited space for a detailed discussion of issues. The reader needs to be convinced that the issues treated in such scanty chapters cannot be elaborated. This gives the impression that the author does not really have accurate and

detailed facts about the subject of discourse or that he lacks the linguistic competence to tease out these issues elaborately or in detail. This type of feature has psychological effects on the reader because hardly will the reader prepare his mind to digest a particular topic when he/she notices that he/she has already reached the end of the book thereby leaving him/her disappointed. However, one can understand where Bello is coming from. Traditionally, such books target a particular audience like young school leavers, semi-literate readers, low income earners and others with poor educational background who may not have the time and patience to read and digest the matters Bello handles in his books were they to be written in a detailed and sophisticated form.

Collation and Binding

Collation and binding of his pamphlets are generally poor. Most times pages and chapters are misplaced or inserted in wrong places. For example, in *1200 African Proverbs*, the list of contents appeared on page twenty six (p.26) instead of being part of the preliminary pages, its traditional place. This is as a result of poor collation of the signatures of the books. A good book should be produced on bond paper of not less than 60 or 70 grammage in thickness and preferably with glazed covers but Bello's texts are produced on low quality papers and soft cheap paper materials which can be easily destroyed.

Back Matters

Bello's titles do not have back matter – appendices, index, references, blurb as expected of in standard book. A standard book is supposed to have an index, appendices, references, and blurb, where necessary but what we see in the back cover of Bello's texts are advertisement of other titles by the author, vague publication details and several phone numbers that can be contacted for "bulk buying." This clearly shows that Bello's texts can be legitimately called "market literature" because the author/publisher is only concerned with the selling of his products.

Typography, Editing and Styling

The font, type face and sizes are indiscriminately selected. For example, we notice the indiscriminate use of capital letters and underlining of an already capitalized item. This appears like double foregrounding - it makes the work unfriendly to the sight. For example, in *1200 African Proverbs* under the subhead "categories included" we have "COMMON SENSE, HARD WORK, PEACE, PATIENCE, HUMILITY..." (26).

When an item is in bold print, it is unnecessary underlining it but in Bello's case some items in bold print are underlined at the same time without any justification for the double foregrounding. For example, in *Idiomatic Expressions* nearly all the items in bold prints are underlined.

Prepositions, articles and conjunctions are usually in lower case when they appear in middle positions but in Bello's case we notice that he capitalized them irrespective of where they appear in a sentence. This is inconsistent with international best practices in publishing. We also noted earlier that the grammatical errors in the texts were as a result of poor editing and proofreading.

Vague Referencing

**DISCOURSE OF KNOWLEDGE VERSUS DISCOURSE OF SELF-LEGITIMATION IN
CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN POPULAR LITERATURE: AN ENQUIRY INTO ADEBAYO BELLO'S
SELF-HELP PAMPHLETS -----Ikenna Kamalu and Ebele Emilia Mmewu**

Some of the references made by the author are vague. For example, in *12 Rules* Bello asserts that no man would want to have a wife that looks like **Sarah** or **Mary Magdalene**. Here, the writer leaves readers to their own imagination. It is not certain if he is referring to the biblical Sarah or Mary Magdalene or some other persons. He also makes wild claims or sweeping generalizations. For instances, his claim that men do not like women they have had pre-marital sex with cannot be taken as a universal truism. Bello also makes vague references to the bible and some African proverbs that did not connect properly with the topic of discourse. In some cases the reader wonders about the relevance of such references/quotations in the discourse context.

Conclusion

Pamphlet authors like Adebayo Bello present themselves as problem solvers and claim that the problems of their readers will be solved if the readers follow the laid down rules and regulations stated in their pamphlets. They write in response to perceived social problems such as how to manage relationships - love and marriage, write application letters for job, interview successfully for employment, delivered from the powers of darkness, improve self esteem, speak eloquently in public, stay current in general knowledge, and so on. The seven pamphlets of Bello under consideration are typical of OML – they attempt to solve some of the many social problems that confront the modern man in the urban space. While five of the titles are concerned with issues that arise from relationships the other two are on general knowledge such as proverbs, idiomatic expressions and their meanings. This presents Bello as a man who is knowledgeable in relationships and general knowledge. This study reveals that the texts under consideration lack the intellectual depth to solve the many social problems that Bello claims to be an expert in. The shallow content of each text, fractured grammatical expressions and poor production quality of the pamphlets designate the titles as market literary texts that were written for the economic survival of the writer and for his self-legitimation as an expert problem solver.

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